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BEGUN IN 1858

Edith.



EDITH;

OR,

THE QUAKER'S DAUGHTER.

A TALE OF PURITAN TIMES.

BY

ONE OF HER DESCENDANTS.

NEW YORK:

PUBLISHED BY MASON BROTHERS.

1856.

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MY DEAR FRIEND,—

Accompanying this you will receive a volume from which you may derive some interest, from the fact that the author is no other than the companion of your childhood, and the playmate of days long gone by. The announcement may perhaps surprise you, and set you to wondering what in the world could have put it into my head to turn authoress at this late day. I would tell you if I could; but the same question sometimes comes into my own mind, and I am as puzzled as yourself for an answer. Perhaps it was because I have lately been so much alone, having given my third and last daughter in marriage last winter, as you know, and feeling afterward desirous to find some occupation in which I could forget my loneliness.

Ever since I left that kind home where I was so warmly cherished—that home made so dear by countless and continual deeds of love, still blessed by the presence of your beloved mother, and over which your father's emancipated spirit seems yet to linger—my heart turns with affectionate warmth to the associations connected with its memory. Once more I see your father, with his broad-brimmed hat, his straight collar, his benevolent smile, and the moral lee-

son in his very aspect; your mother, with her quiet air, and watchful kindness, and her neat starched handkerchief pinned so precisely in its place, while the little ones—yourself among them—are gathered around her in their neat though plain attire. Thus your family circle appeared on the evening when my uncle brought me to your home, and never shall I forget the awe with which I regarded your parents until your dear mother pressed me fondly in her arms, and in her kindest tones bade me welcome. And how surprised I was to find, in those demure-looking children, playmates as fond of fun and mischief as my heart could desire! Well, my dear Kitty, those days are gone, but the memory of them is bright yet, and affords me many hours of pleasant contemplation. Even now it is leading me away from my subject and almost deluding me into the belief that I am once more young.

It has often pained me to find how little is known of your sect in what you would call "the world." Persons of extensive information, writers, and even clergymen, are in many instances ignorant of their real doctrines, and know the Quaker only by his peculiarities. No doubt you have noticed that a Quaker in a book is made to perform some ridiculous part which a sensible member of the sect in real life, would disdain to perpetrate. However, it must be confessed that their peculiarities are such as in a measure excuse this mistake; for, keeping within themselves as they do, little opportunity is afforded others of an insight into their true character. Not much can be known of their religious

belief, because they subscribe to no written creed, and teach no set form of doctrine, and this allows to their ministers (and indeed to any member of the Society) a freedom which constantly subjects them to much unmerited obloquy.

It is seldom remembered that many of their peculiarities belonged equally to the Puritans, who discarded certain practices merely because they were adopted by the Quakers—as for instance, calling the months and days of the week by numbers rather than by names derived from those of heathen deities.

My gay little friend, Mrs. Bonton, was highly amused, the other day, when I told her that the Friends' style of dress was once the fashion.

It would be useless for me to enter upon any attempted description, or if you will, defense of the Quakers. Their principles are such as belong to practical religion every where, and will never cease to exist, while many of their peculiarities must disappear before the spirit of enlightened progress.

And now, my friend, there is one request I would make of you, which is, that you will not betray me as the author of this little volume. To tell the truth, I have no ambition to figure in such a character. Indeed I have only been masquerading a little, and shall now retire into my former domestic habits.* You would appreciate my feelings if you had been here a month ago, when the book was finished and an investigation into the condition of household mat-

ters commenced. My best blankets were moth-eaten, carpets ditto, table and bed linen stolen, silver spoons missing, the preserve-closet a sea of ferment—ants in the sugar barrels, and many such grievances. I was terribly mortified, and forthwith began to introduce a reform. My maids all left in high dudgeon, because I presumed, as Bridget expressed it, “to interfere wid the housekapin.” That, however, was soon remedied, and I started afresh with new and consequently willing hands, and a determination that if I were ever tempted to begin another book it should be with *one* eye, at least, where it ought to be, namely, at home. (Methinks I hear some *curious* reader exclaim, “What a pity the authoress did not keep them *both* there, instead of using them in writing this present volume !”)

With your good mother's permission, I dedicate this book to her in token of my gratitude for the kindness she has shown me from childhood upward.

EDITH;

OR,

THE QUAKER'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER I.

THE sun of an October day arose clear and bright upon the town of Boston. The calm waters of its placid bay beamed with the crimson glow of early morning, then gradually paling into purer light, they mirrored forth the brightness of a Sabbath day.

The town itself, built close upon the water's edge, gave but few signs that it contained a living population. No idlers gazed through the small diamond-shaped panes of the square windows, no busy feet hurried along the unpaved walk, no merry laugh of childhood, no sounds of daily toil or daily life issued from those unpretending dwellings. The solemn silence of the wilderness seemed to pervade the place, as though subduing by its mystic spell all human passion, and bearing upward in its viewless wings, in noiseless harmony, the praise of man and nature.

The day, however, had not far advanced when the

deep roll of a drum was heard sounding from the heart of the town, and floating far away over the bosom of the waters. And forth at its call came from each domicile the family group, which with slow and seemly tread, wended its way unto the house of God. And now the voice of prayer and praise ascends, and the forest wilds give back their echoes to the untrodden hills, whose breezes waft the exulting strain to heaven.

In a small one-story house in the suburb of the town were gathered a few of that despised and persecuted sect called Quakers, who had assembled there to worship God in their own peculiar way. The apartment which contained them was quite bare of furniture, not boasting of even so much as a solitary chair, but seats arranged with rough planks, laid upon upright logs, were placed along the walls, and seated upon these, on either side of the apartment, were the male and female worshipers of this humble sanctuary. So fixed and motionless were their attitudes, so passionless each downcast visage, that a spectator would almost have deemed he gazed not upon living forms, but on quaint figures carved in wood or stone. Their voice ascended not in prayer or praise, the language of instruction from human lips fell not upon their ear, but who shall say that in that solemn silence the words of a higher teaching came not with a realizing sense unto their soul—"Be still, and know that I am God."

They had not stolen secretly to that lonely spot, but

they sought the quiet of the place that their hour of sacred stillness might not be profaned by the idle stare or jeer of passers-by; and as they sat there in their placid silence, they seemed borne above the knowledge that they were a people persecuted and proscribed.

Yet there was something in each face, though immovable, that told a tale of strife and hardship. It was of that internal strife—that subduing of the mind to the will—that subjection of the feelings which holds in check their ready flow; and there too were written the sterner lines that the conflict between man and man marks upon the human countenance. With the women, this expression had softened into more of sadness, taking the hue of her tenderer nature: as if with the sterner sex these characters had been graven upon stone, and with the other molded on the more yielding wax.

Thus they sat until the period allotted to their meditation had expired, then turning to each other, each extended his right hand and grasped his neighbor's with a friendly pressure. There was a deep sympathy between them, which gave a solemn meaning to the action. It was as if they then and there sealed a contract of fidelity to their God and to each other, which each heart felt although no tongue had spoken it.

Among the different groups which left that lonely dwelling was one of an elderly man and a maiden in the bloom of youthful beauty.

The two walked on for a while in silence, avoiding the thoroughfares, and pursuing a retired path, where they were not liable to meet the gaze of the idler or encounter the malignant frown of their religious foes. Had John Morrison been alone, he would probably, in that spirit of self-sacrifice, not unmingled with the defiant mood, which often characterizes those who are ready to suffer martyrdom gladly in a holy cause, have firmly trod the public way, regardless of the consequences of his temerity. But watchful of his daughter's safety, he ever avoided exposing her to unnecessary notice. And well might he seek to shield such beauty from the public eye, for as she now walked beside him she was indeed beautiful, despite the homely fashion of her Quaker garb, which discards the aid that dress can offer to render the face and the person attractive.

"We are still greatly favored, my daughter, in being permitted to enjoy these seasons of peaceful meditation. But it is believed that we are about to be deprived of the privilege."

"My father, I long for some quiet place to which we might retire, where I could see thee living, without fear of molestation, in the enjoyment of spiritual freedom."

"There may be such places as thou speakest of, but thinkest thou that it were meet to leave our labors here unperformed to go in quest of that freedom, which methinks thou dost value too highly, when thou canst set it in the way of duty?"

"It is for thy sake I covet it, for it grieves me much to see thy old age made unhappy."

"Edith, thy speech is without wisdom. My peace it is not in man's power to take or to bestow. I must do my Master's bidding, even though mine errand offend. But thou, my child must go hence; I have provided for thee the means of safety and shelter from the storm that threatens our people."

"Father, I will enjoy no safety in which thou dost not share. Think not of me, therefore, unless, indeed, thou wilt prize thine own security for my sake."

"No, Edith. Dear as thou art to me I must not, through anxiety for thee, be led from my high commission; for doth not our Master himself say, 'He that loveth wife or children more than me is not worthy of me!' To us it is given to lift up the voice against the oppressor and the hireling, and we will be faithful to our trust. But hast thou heard that, by the voice of these men's council, we are banished hence on penalty of death?"

"Then, surely, thou hast no thought of remaining here? Oh! my father, let us hasten from this wicked place. Thou and the few of thy people who are here can do naught to oppose these cruel rulers. Why, then, should ye stay to become their victims? There are other places where thy voice may be raised in support of thy religion. Wherefore sacrifice thy life in a useless contest?"

"Say no more, Edith. Thy words too plainly show that thou understandest not our divine office. *This* is the spot to which we are sent to proclaim the truth to a stiff-necked generation. Use no more persuasions to make thy father a recreant to his duty. Here I remain; but thou—"

"Name it not; I will never leave thee. Let thy fate be mine, for I will stay with thee, and where thou diest I will die."

"Would thou couldst also say, 'Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.' But, alas! my child is ranked among the enemies of my religion. It is a bitter cup which a daughter's hand doth proffer me."

"No, father; I do not rank myself among those who are enemies to thy religion; nor should it grieve thee that my mother's faith is mine, since thine own lips taught it me long ago. I will go with thee even unto death, but never, no never will I profess their blood-stained faith."

"Thou speakest in too violent a tone; thy words are not in the meek spirit of humility. A more submissive condition of mind better fitteth thine age and duty to thy parent. Prepare, then, I say, to leave this place ere sunrise of to-morrow, with one who offers thee protection, for, alas, I can afford thee none!"

"Thou shalt not send me from thee, father. In all else thou mayst claim obedience, but never will I con-

sent to leave thee, nor does the duty of a child extend so far. Thou and I are left to each other, and we will cling together so long as life itself holds place within our bosom."

"Nay, my child, not for thine own safety alone, but for the more faithful performance of my duty, I would have thee depart. Reflect that I am aged, and my health already much enfeebled, and were it to please our heavenly Parent to visit me with imprisonment or to call me hence, where would be thy refuge? For, although thou art not of our sect, thy father's religion places thee in peril, and none dare show kindness to thee, or offer protection to the Quaker's child, though Heaven move his heart, perchance, to pity."

"All thou hast said to dissuade me only serves to show me a daughter's duty. Should I leave thee because thou art sick and aged, and needest some kind hand to minister to thee? Methinks I hear my mother's voice bidding me desert thee not; nor will I. Wherefore should I go with strangers and forsake thee? Art thou not all I have on earth to cling to? Think not, then, to cast me from thy bosom, for here I will stay, and not even thy command shall, for one moment, shake my resolution."

The old man's voice was tremulous with emotion as he answered, "Why, Edith, scarce do I know thee in this sudden mood. I should almost judge thy conduct unwomanly, were it not so like my dear departed one.

Well, I can not force thee hence, my child, although I should much rejoice to know that thou wert safely bestowed elsewhere."

"Tremble not for me, father; my trust is in Him who is able to protect us both. And, after all, I fear not much these cruel men, although it were not wise to provoke their anger."

"It is believed they will scarcely go so far as to shed blood, and that they thought this threat would drive us hence in haste and terror. They believe, doubtless, that because we will not fight we shall all the sooner run away, showing how little they know of that very religion whose principles they profess, and whose requirements they pretend to answer."

They had now nearly reached their humble domicile, when, to Edith's dismay, she saw approaching them two individuals, whom she recognized as Mr. Mildman, a young minister of high popularity, and Mr. Harding, one of the chief magistrates of the town, both being among the most bitter enemies of the Quakers.

John Morrison and his daughter would have passed them by with a friendly greeting, but their path was intercepted by these worthies, and the simple "Well, friends" of the Quaker met with a sharp response from the indignant magistrate.

"Why dost thou wear that hat of thine in this goodly presence?" he angrily demanded.

"Why should I not wear my hat, friend?" was the quiet reply.

"An' thou art ignorant of the reason, it were well to teach thee," answered Harding, and raising his walking stick he struck it from the old man's head, leaving him standing uncovered in the noonday sun.

"Wherefore dost thou tarry here," inquired the minister. "Knowest thou not the decree, even as the law of the Medes and Persians, which is pronounced against thy profane sect? If thou leave not this place right speedily thy life stands forfeit to the State. And for thee, maiden, it were well to wear a more meek and seemly aspect. Begone, I say, or to-morrow's sunset may find ye in the dungeon's cell, whence ye shall scarce escape, unless humbled to confess your vile errors, and be received into the bosom of our Church, who nobly extends her arms to embrace the penitent."

While the Reverend Mr. Mildman thus addressed them, the pair stood in silence before him, and when he closed his remarks John Morrison made a motion as if about to reply, but was checked by a sudden pressure of the arm to which Edith clung; and thus reminded of her peril he remained mute, while she, as they passed on, took up her father's hat from the ground, and reverently replaced it upon his head, the tears of shame and anger starting into her eyes at the insult to which her aged parent had been subjected.

John Morrison had become a convert to Quakerism

about ten years before the date of the commencement of our story. Up to that time, although little interested in the subject of religion, he had been formally connected with the Church of England. His wife, who still clung fondly to its early teachings, grieved sadly over his defection, while he vainly endeavored to convince her that those views alone were correct which he now newly advocated. This difference in their religious opinions produced, however, no unhappy consequences, so far as their mutual affection and confidence were concerned. Yet it caused the tender wife and mother many an anxious hour, and seeing the storm of persecution raging around them she trembled for the future fate of her husband and her child. Eager to escape from these scenes, she was earnest in her desire to emigrate to that newly found land of peace and freedom which had already afforded a sanctuary to many faithful and zealous souls. Chiefly in compliance with her wishes, and partly in that missionary spirit which leads many a pious adventurer to seek a distant land, he embarked with his family, and a small number of his despised name, for that "land of promise," that far-off wilderness, which lay many a league across the ocean's wave.

Little did he dream that ere he reached that distant home he should be called to part with his faithful and beloved Margaret. But before they had been many days at sea she was attacked with an alarming illness,

and although every attention which their situation afforded was lavished upon her, she felt that death was at hand; and leaving him the sole protector of their darling Edith, she departed, commending both to the guardianship of their heavenly Father.

Sad was the blow that fell upon the husband's heart, and deep was the grief of Edith at the loss of a mother most tenderly beloved. Just sixteen, she had reached the age to feel daily more and more the loss of such a parent; but anxious to assuage her father's sorrow, she strove to forget her own, and make his comfort and happiness her peculiar care. Indeed his condition called for more than ordinary attention, for being naturally of a delicate constitution his grief now wrought upon both mind and frame, and Edith's task was that of nurse as well as comforter.

Before they left England Mrs. Morrison had adopted the peculiar style of the Quaker dress in order to identify herself with her husband as much as possible, fearing a separation from him, in case he should be so unfortunate as to incur the rigor of the law. And as they were about to seek a new home, it was greatly repugnant to her feelings that the difference in their religious sentiments should become a subject of public curiosity and comment, and perhaps an excuse for interference in their family concerns. Edith shared in her mother's feelings and followed her example, and now became still more anxious to fulfill these intentions.

They had not resided long in Boston when they discovered that so far from escaping persecution by coming to New England, the Quakers only encountered there more bitter enmity than in the mother country.

Seeing this was the case, and feeling himself incompetent to protect his daughter from the many dangers by which they were surrounded, John Morrison had several times purposed and arranged to send her back to England. Her mother's sister who resided there would gladly receive her, and endeavor to supply the place of her departed parent. But Edith steadily refused to go, and besought him with tears to think of that step no longer, unless he would himself accompany her and consider England his future home. He, however, conceived it to be his duty to remain in Boston, and bear his testimony against the cruelties to which he saw his brethren subjected. Forced, as he was, to consent to Edith's stay, he consoled himself with the thought that, as she was not a Quaker, she could not incur the full weight of the laws which oppressed that sect, and trusted that in case of his death, some heaven-directed friend would arise as her protector.

Edith's motive in keeping her religion a secret may easily be seen. She feared that if known, it might serve as an excuse for strong and tyrannical hands to separate her from her beloved and only remaining parent, and he, on his part, knew that he would not be considered competent to have the care of even his own

daughter, under existing circumstances. The subject, therefore, was one rarely alluded to.

The persecution to which she now saw her father subjected, only drew him more closely to her heart, and awoke within her a spirit she knew not she possessed. Always when he permitted her, she accompanied him in his walks, and more than once had language of ready insult and contempt been checked by her steady glance of courage, which inspired their intended assailant with involuntary respect and admiration. Thus, while the father deemed himself her protector, oftener was the daughter the guardian of his path, and her eye averting danger from his way.

CHAPTER II.

IN the evening twilight Edith sat alone in her cheerless little chamber. The events of the day had fallen with a depressing influence upon her feelings, which, long and painfully suppressed, now broke forth in secret and bitter tears. Grief for her mother's loss yet fresh within her heart, mingled with apprehensions for her father's safety, and the disappointment of those bright anticipations which clustered around their transatlantic home, all served to fill her mind with despondency, and envelop in impenetrable darkness their unpropitious future.

Leaning her arms upon the window sill, and bowing her young head upon them, she gave way to the rush of emotions so long accumulating within her bosom. So deeply was she absorbed in her sorrow that she scarcely noticed a low and half-frightened tap upon the door, which, contrary to the custom of the time, was secured thus early in the evening, for the threshold of the Quaker dwelling was not sacred from the foot of any who might choose to obtrude there an unwelcome presence.

A repetition of the summons was without hesitation answered by Edith, who hastened to remove the wooden bar by which the door was fastened, and in another moment she was clasped in the arms of a lovely girl of about her own age, who, kissing away her tears, anxiously and soothingly, inquired into the cause of her distress.

"Dear Alice, I almost feared thou hadst forsaken me."

"Forsaken thee, my own Edith! Thou must never judge of me so unkindly, for it is only when I dare not come, that I am absent from thee long. This very evening I did feign sickness, and desired to be alone that I might repose awhile, in order to create this blessed opportunity. And indeed it were no falsehood, for my soul itself was sick for sight of thee. And even now I must fly back like a lapwing, nor tarry many moments in thy sweet company."

"Alice, thy friendship is dearer to me than thou knowest, yet I tremble for thy safety, and would entreat thee to come here no more, but that my lips almost refuse to pronounce against their mistress so hard a sentence."

"Thy lips are most discreet, Edith, and thy heart is a naughty little thing for trying to teach them treason to thy only friend. Cease to prate of *my* peril and thou wouldst not vex me, for it is to warn thee of thine own that I am come hither."

"My father has told me of the danger we stand in, but he will not go, Alice! This was in part the reason why I was so distressed, when thy bright face smiled in upon me like a cheerful sunbeam."

"Oh, but he has not told thee all! This very afternoon I overheard a conversation between my father and that dear young saint and hypocrite, Mr. Mildman—nay, do not shake thy head and look so reprovingly, for I must speak my mind. (But they knew not of my ear in their councils, I warrant thee!) Edith, I blush with shame to tell thee that my father is the enemy whom you must fear. I witnessed your encounter this morning, and God forgive me, but my heart burned with anger against one I should only love and reverence."

"Do not let it grieve thee, Alice. I can not but believe God will soften their hearts, although for a time they be filled with anger and cruelty."

"Indeed, I trust so, dear girl. And more, as my father is a tender-hearted man, who would not so much as tread upon a tiny ant in his path. And to think he should be harsh to thee, who saved my poor life so nobly. Oh, he shall hear of that, and then see if he will turn his anger against you!"

"Thou didst promise, Alice, to keep that a secret within thy own bosom. Indeed, there is nothing I fear more than being brought into the slightest notice. Thou wilt be silent, dear girl, I know, for my sake?"

"But remember that my promise was with the condition that it should bind me, unless I could one day serve thee by telling all."

"Farewell then, dearest friend, for I shall never see thee more!"

"Not yet—not yet, Edith! Indeed it was only the fear that I should be forbidden to come here in future that kept the secret within my lips this very afternoon. But I forget my cruel errand! My father hath pledged himself to come to-morrow morning to seek you, and if he finds you, to bring you before the Governor, and doubtless to the prison. Thou didst say thy father would not go away?"

"Yes. We must stay here and meet our fate. My father has forbidden me to importune him further on the subject, and I will not obey his command to leave him and seek my own safety."

"Oh, it is madness for him to remain! And thou art a brave and noble-hearted girl, and dost right to stay by his side in time of danger. Yet he should go for thy sake, and not expose thy youth and sex to this peril."

"Our Saviour saith, 'He that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me.'"

"May He protect thee, dear girl! They shall never harm a hair of thy head, if my efforts can avail aught. And Edith, to-morrow morning persuade thy father to keep within, and do thou make no stir about the

house. I will myself be up with the lark, and accompany my sage parent in his morning ramble, and depend upon it, it shall be no fault of mine if he go not in the wrong track to seek thee."

"I will endeavor to do as thou sayest Alice, although it will serve for a brief time only."

"Take courage and despair not, for I have a plan whereby I hope to serve thee a more lasting turn. Yet ask no questions, for thou shalt not know it yet; and perchance if thou did, that wise head of thine would only shake in disapproval."

"Thou canst never keep a secret long from thine own Edith, I warrant me! But how speeds thy wooing, prythee, Alice fair?"

A shade passed over the young girl's face, and tears, which she strove to hide, came into her blue eyes; as she answered—

"Ask me not, I beg thee. Alas, Edith! man's love is short-lived as the dew upon the hill side."

"We do indeed so read in idle romance, but I can find it in my heart sometimes to doubt that sad conclusion."

"Mayst thou never have cause to abjure thy faith, my friend. Indeed, thou wilt not; for he whose love is won by such as thou art, will love thee truly, or else prove false to truth itself, so excellent art thou. But I, woe is me; I am a silly, fitful girl, and am scarce worth the loving!" and now fairly weeping, she flung herself

upon Edith's neck, and sobbed as if her heart were breaking.

"Nay, Alice darling, tell me the cause of thy grief, that together we may find the remedy. Weep not so bitterly, for I feel well assured Edward is not the false one thou thinkest him. Come, we will heal this lover's quarrel, and thy tears shall turn into smiles of brightest sunshine."

"Oh, Edith! I have not lain eyes upon him since I was last here!"

"For three days! three whole days thou sayest? Indeed I must laugh at thee for branding him with falsehood so easily. How knowest thou that some urgent business does not detain him from thee?"

"Because he told me he should not come again!"

"Wherefore? There was surely some reason which thou hast not told me."

"There was. He said he should come no more until I gave consent to his revealing the whole to my father, and asking his sanction to our marriage."

"And thereby has shown himself the soul of honor instead of the false fickle man thou callest him."

"It is only an excuse for his coldness. If he did not wish that our intercourse should altogether cease, why should he desire to speak to my father on the subject? Edward knows right well that he is already looked upon with dislike and suspicion, and such a request as his would be answered with a command to think of me no longer."

"Thou art very unjust, Alice. Thou hast no warrant that thy father would so receive him."

"I have, indeed I have. I have seen his cold looks, and Lisbet knows—"

"Lisbet is no suitable adviser for thee, dear one. Thy father's cold looks may all spring from the displeasure he feels at Edward's supposed want of confidence in him."

"Yet Lisbet has heard my father say that if he were but sure of Edward's—(oh, Edith! he calls it 'treachery')—he would forbid him coming to our house any longer. I know not what has turned him so utterly against his friend's son, for when he first came to us my father was most kind and courteous toward him."

"Forgive me, Alice, if I say it is all thy own doing; yet I would not say so did I not believe that thou hast the remedy in thy hands. Thou saidst his patience was well-nigh ended. Oh! trifle no longer with his happiness and thine own, but do thy part to repair this mischief which delay has made, and then, at least, Edward will have no cause to reproach thee."

"It is too late now, too late. Yet I believe he loves me still, and he will come again. I will think of thy advice, Edith, and should it seem well, and the time propitious, will follow it, too. I should not, at this time, grieve thee with my foolish fears. Edward, doubtless, is true to honor, and I will give my runaway tongue a wholesome biting for uttering such

slanders of him. But my plan, girl, my plan! hast thou no woman's curiosity that not a question regarding it has passed thy lips? or is it too worthless to merit a moment's attention?"

"Why, didst thou not forbid me to ask, and say I should not know it yet?"

"Short-sighted mortal! know that it was said merely to arouse thy curiosity and elicit thy questioning. Thou knowest yonder goodly young man, our eloquent minister; well, I fancy that my father prefers him for a son-in-law, which is partly the reason why he frowns on Edward. Now, Edith, before I tell thee another word, *thou* shalt make *me* a promise: Say thou wilt preach me no sermon, nor frown, nor shake thy head—in short, that thou wilt not speak one single word against the project I am about to unfold."

"I will not promise thee. Thy preamble shows that it is something which my conscience will condemn, and, therefore, my tongue shall not be fettered with a promise."

"Thou wilt annihilate me with thy scrupulous nicety. But I have thee, for all thy cunning. I will just tell it thee, and then run away before thou hast time to lecture me. Now listen, and answer not! This minister, although guarded in his approaches, begins to wear the watchful and attentive guise of a lover. Beshrew me now if I use not his devotion in a better cause than mine own. His voice hath great weight in the coun-

cils, an' woman's wit fail not, it shall yet be raised in thy service."

"Oh! Alice! now indeed I see that thou art thyself the false one. Edward is true, but thou hast ceased to love him."

"Not so. Mr. Mildman has turned my father's face against him, and now I have the right to punish the offender. He shall learn to interfere in the affairs of Alice Harding! And fear not for Edward; there is power in smiles, Edith, and when they fail, tears are a potent agency."

"Alice, dear girl, be warned. I would thou hadst not told me thy secret plans, for they both shock and grieve me. Thou shalt not be false to thy father, to thy lover, to Mr. Mildman, and to thyself—to serve me. I will accept no kindness at thy hands obtained so unfairly."

"Thou thinkest me dishonorable, Edith, yet I am not without some womanly feelings. My dignity shall not be compromised, and Edward shall suffer no injury at my hands. But my father and the minister have plotted against my peace, and I will return their maneuvering with usury."

"Thou wilt practice a deception, and all deception is a compromise of sincerity. Once more be persuaded, I entreat thee. Deal openly with thy father, and all will be as thou desirest."

"Never! I dare not risk Edward's frank and

manly bearing against the other's sanctimonious cringing. But I tarry too long, for see, yonder forest shades are already peopled with elf and goblin. Fare thee well, sweet one, and keep within to-morrow, as I bade thee."

"Farewell, dear mistaken girl. I can not but think thou wilt repent thy dangerous scheming. I would go with thee past yon fairy domain, but my company is more dangerous than that of sprite or fay."

It was late that night ere either of the two friends closed their eyes in slumber. Edith's mind was perplexed with many anxieties. Fears for her father's safety drove sleep from her pillow long after he had lost all consciousness of care and responsibility in forgetfulness. She mourned, too, over the waywardness of her misguided friend. "Alas!" thought she, "she has never known a mother's teaching!"

Meanwhile the sprightly Alice tossed upon her pillow, revolving deeply-laid schemes within her busy brain. She thought she had devised a plan by which she could subdue her pious lover to her influence, and, at the same time, preserve her maidenly dignity, and avoid falling into the snare she was resolved to set for him. "Nay," she soliloquized, as if excusing herself to herself, "it will be but a good work to soften his heart to mercy, and to-morrow I will even condescend to be gracious unto him, at least, so far as I may be, consistently with womanly reserve. Perchance he will

think he is kind-hearted for *my* sake ; but my foolish wit shall teach him that it is much better to be so for *mercy's* own."

With such thoughts as these in her mind she composed herself to sleep, although she was not without the consciousness that she was embarking in a dangerous enterprise.

CHAPTER III.

It was late in the afternoon of the following day when Edith, leaving her father within, walked forth to breathe the refreshing evening air. Choosing the most retired paths which led to the water side, and clambering far out upon the rocks that jutted into the bay, she sought her favorite resting-place behind a steep ridge which served entirely to conceal her from persons standing on the shore. Her seat was reached with difficulty, by sometimes leaping from rock to rock, or clinging to their rough projections. The path led upward among the crags and stones, and bore so uninviting an aspect that few maidens would have ventured thereupon. But Edith loved to steal away thus from every sound that told of busy life and its rude jarrings and contention, and lose herself in memories sacred and most dear. Far away beyond her sight, in the deep bosom of the waters, was her mother's grave; and in the sound of these dashing waves, she seemed to hear a voice of soothing sympathy. Here she could weep unseen, and pour out the secret grief of her bosom. Here her mother's spirit seemed to hover

nearest, and in the undisturbed repose of nature, to hold communion with her sorrowing child. Here, as she cast the world behind her, and approached the verge of the unseen, her mother, standing on the borders of the eternal world, seemed to embrace her with those spiritual arms; and she came thence, strengthened for the next day's conflict, patient to watch and to endure.

Long she sat there, gazing through misty tears far into the blue expanse before her, where the sky and the waters met to blend in harmony. "Ah," she murmured, "would that I too had passed that unseen boundary, and were now sleeping death's quiet sleep with thee, my mother!"

Another moment, and the pang of self-reproach smote upon her heart, for the thought of her father started up before her, and remembering that she had been long absent from him, she hastily arose from her seat and turned to descend the rocky path. But so utterly had she lost consciousness of what was passing around her, that the tide had come in unperceived, and the waves were now dashing within a few inches of the spot on which she stood. To return by the accustomed way was impossible, to climb the cliff before her was equally so, nor could any signals she might make be seen from the shore. Was there indeed no way by which she could escape? A sickening apprehension seized her soul, and the watery grave, which a few mo-

ments before had seemed so peaceful and calm, she now shrunk from with all the feelings natural to humanity. But she was not one to perish without making every effort at self-preservation. She exerted all the power of her voice in calling for aid, and in the intervals of her screams, listened for a reply so intently that she thought she heard the very flowing of her blood through her veins. The hum of the town came to her ear like a far-off murmur; the sound of the clock striking the hour smote upon her brain like her own death-knell. No answering voice cheered her with hope of succor. The evening twilight was fast fading in the west, and the shadows of night fell with solemn silence upon the waters. Nearer and nearer came the ocean's swell, and her garments were moistened with its spray. The next wave washes over her feet. One effort more for life. She kneels upon the now watery seat, and, uplifting her pale countenance to heaven, breathes a silent prayer. Committing her father to that guardian care, and with that dear name, "mother," upon her lips, she throws herself into the sea, with a faint hope that she may reach the shore. For a few moments she struggled with the waves, then felt them closing over her. Again she rose to the surface, and, for a while, kept herself afloat by the motion of her hands. But her strength was soon exhausted, and her limbs cramped by the chilling waters, and life seemed about to desert her. Many mingled sounds

came to her stifled sense: she thought she heard her father's voice calling to her in tones of anguish; that she saw Alice, with outstretched arms, hastening to her assistance. Then her mother's soothing accents came in gentler cadences to her ear, and—oh! joy—that loved being clasps her to her bosom. At last she feels that long-desired embrace! and upward, upward is she borne, and life sinks away in a delicious calm!

CHAPTER IV.

ALICE HARDING was an only child, and the cherished darling of her loving father. The early loss of her mother, to whom he was most tenderly attached, had doubly endeared to him the sole remaining fruit of their union, and he watched over her infant years with almost a woman's solicitude and patient care. Into his ear she ever poured the story of her childish griefs, and found unfailing sympathy; and he was never happier than when sharing her little sports, and listening to the music of her joyous laughter. Every change in her tiny face was noted, every caprice of appetite, or sign of languor excited his apprehensions; and were the little mistress ill, no hands but his were allowed to tend her, no other eyes to watch beside her pillow.

Children soon learn to feel their power, and thus indulged, Alice, although possessed of unusual sweetness of disposition, appeared to every one, except her fond parent, a self-willed child.

As she grew into maturity her promise of beauty ripened into perfect bloom, and her father's heart

swelled with loving pride to call so fair a maiden "daughter." Yet to him she was still the *little* Alice, and he pictured to himself a long delicious season, ere she should be *old enough* for other than a *parent's* love.

And when some youth of the village who had gazed upon the young girl's beauty from afar, and felt his heart leap into his mouth, when a stray smile from her rosy lips, by chance, lighted upon him, at last mustered courage to request an interview with papa, and, as the custom of the time demanded, ask permission to become a suitor to the fair one, Mr. Harding would put on his spectacles, and finding himself still unable, with their aid, to see into so profound a mystery, would take them off, rub them for some moments with the corner of his silken handkerchief, then carefully re-adjusting them on the parental nose, would fix upon the unhappy youth such a gaze of surprise and scrutiny as made him more than half repent his rashness.

"Pho, pho!" he would say—"my little Alice? Why she is a child, man, and thou art scarce more! Go along with thy love and thy folly and get thee to thy books—dost hear, boy? thy *books*, until thy beard has a chance to grow!"

And after the poor "boy" had departed, in a state bordering on desperation, and with a firm resolve to hasten home, and seize upon that almost useless though dangerous weapon, his razor, and therewith to

revenge the insults his tender chin had received by — shaving himself,—Mr. Harding, regardless of the anguish he had inflicted, walked up and down his study, laughing and scolding by turns, at such presumption.

“They would rob me of her, my little ‘ewe lamb!’ They would take her from my bosom and perhaps make her a slave—the tender little thing! Why, it was only yesterday her mother laid her in these arms, a tiny helpless babe!” and a tear would make its escape from his eye. Then, as the picture of Alice arose before him he thought how it would amuse her to hear of the poor youth’s discomfiture, and laughed till the tears came again. “The saucy minx! she shall never know it, not she. It might put mischief into her silly little head to tell her!”

Alice, hearing some unusual stir below, would now come singing down the stairs, and the study door, like that which always obeyed the fairy’s bidding, readily flew open to admit her.

“Dear papa, what a noise you are making! Methinks you must have here concealed some friend to fun and laughter. Acquaint me with him, I pray, for surely I heard another voice within beside your own.”

“Nay, busy girl, I will have no prying into the secrets of this apartment. There are none here save thyself and me, and our worthy ancestors, who, for aught

thou knowest, may sometimes step out from their tarnished state and come down to keep me jovial company."

"No, for surely those grim lips were never so wicked as to smile. But tell me, I beseech you, the cause of your merriment, that I may have my share of it, too."

"Thou shalt not know it, Alice! Such topics are unmeet for thy years. But come, get thy mufflers and let us out in this warm sunshine."

"Never a step will I stir until my curiosity is satisfied." And so by dint of teasing and coaxing she would get the whole story from her fond father, and join right heartily, though with an abashed countenance, in the laughter which rang forth at its conclusion.

But although Alice laughed, her merriment was occasioned by different thoughts than those which caused her father's amusement.

The conscious glance of admiration she frequently encountered, and the gleam of pleasure which her slightest favors often occasioned, told her their flattering tale; and although she received these as her proper due, and with the tyranny of beauty levied her tax of homage, yet her heart would sometimes flutter at the whispered word that told of something more; that something, which, though ignorant of, she looked forward to as her allotted portion.

She would fain experience it, but still she would defer the knowledge. She longed, yet feared to taste the cup whose draught has power to clothe in rainbow hues this whole existence, but which doth sometimes cast a gloom upon the face of nature, making life a living death, and the grave a wished-for hiding place. The flowery pathway was before her, but how knew she that a serpent lurked not there? Well might she pause before venturing upon that enchanted ground, for none having entered there may retrace their steps, or coming thence, bring back the gayety of heart with which they sped!

Alice laughed then, partly because her father laughed, partly at the advice he gave, and still more at the idea of her extreme juvenility; for although her slender form had not attained its full maturity, yet she had grown to woman's stature, and considered herself (as what girl of sixteen does not?) quite competent to inflict misery upon the other sex.

It was not long ere there came one within her magic circle, the memory of whose thoughtful gaze she strove to banish from her hours of solitude. He was a stranger, and for some reason Alice could not herself quite comprehend, she shrunk from making inquiries into his history. Occasionally she encountered him in her walks, and her eyes fell beneath the glance of those dark orbs, in whose depths a world of emotion lay slumbering.

As is usual in such cases, Alice grew thoughtful and dreamy. Her voice was less often heard in song, and she loved to sit alone with her head leaning on her hand, and her mind absorbed in reverie. Sometimes she entirely forgot to sweeten her father's coffee, and when reminded of the omission, in her confusion, she was very apt to put a double quantity of sugar in his cup, a circumstance which was very enigmatical to Mr. Harding, since Alice had, until now, always seemed to hit his taste exactly in this particular.

There was a mystery about her conduct which made him very uncomfortable. He thought she was surely ill, and not wishing to alarm her by mentioning his suspicions, he queried with her maid as to the cause of these alarming symptoms.

Lisbet was amazed at the idea of Alice being ill, and answered that there was not a rosier lady in the bonnie realm of old England, much less in the wilds of America.

"But something is at the root of it, Lisbet. Hast thou not noted the change my good girl?"

"Why la, sir, Miss Alice is no longer a child, to be all the time singing songs and have no thoughts for any thing but fun and frolic. And may be, sir," she suggested after a pause, "the young minister's fine sermons has summut to do with it. There's many a body been made sober and thoughtful-like by him."

As Lisbet said this she smoothed her white apron

down with both her hands and placed her head aside, displaying a strikingly meek expression of countenance.

"Why, so it may be, Lisbet. I marvel that thought never occurred to me," said Mr. Harding, in a tone that indicated a much lighter heart. "Perhaps her young mind is led to contemplate that excellent subject, and in reflection upon it, she is amazed into unwonted quietude. But she was always a good child, and methinks hath few transgressions to weigh down her spirit, that she need lose her natural gayety and cheerful temper."

"We are *all* dreadful sinners, Mr. Harding," said Lisbet, with reproof in her tone, as she raised her eyebrows and drew down the corners of her mouth into an expression of penitential grief; "the best of us is poor sinful creatures, and has naught in ourselves to glory of."

"Surely, surely, my girl. Thou speakest well, and I commend thee for thy humility. Only," he continued, as he walked away, "there is no reason why it should make a woman of her."

Now Lisbet was a cunning girl, and knew pretty well by the signs she saw in her lady's behavior, that, to speak in common phrase, she had fallen in love. But Lisbet was discreet too, and did not betray her suspicions to the parental ear. Nor was she disposed to lose her share in the excitement of a love affair, in

which, she flattered herself, her mistress would require her assistance. Therefore, acting a friendly part toward Alice, she adroitly turned Mr. Harding's attention into another channel. "For," said she, "I'm no ways sure of it, and if I were, what kind of a lady's maid should I be to be betrayin' of her secrets, last of all to her father? No, indeed, and 'specially the first love, which is always the tenderest, as nobbdy knows better than myself."

We will now leave Alice for awhile, to the undisturbed enjoyment of her reveries, while we take a peep into the sanctum of the Reverend Mr. Mildman.

CHAPTER V.

MR. MILDMAN was a man of more than ordinary talent, although possessing few personal attractions. Of his private motives we will leave our reader to judge as we proceed with our narrative. He was a general favorite, because he was an attentive pastor, was faithful and untiring in the performance of his duties, gifted with eloquence, was young, with a pensive cast of features, and—unmarried, which last qualification insured his popularity with the ladies, at least. For upon nobody will women in general lavish so much tenderness (maternal or sisterly, as the case may be) as on the unmarried parson—unless we except the parson-widower, and in his case all the interest of the first is felt in his welfare, and a world of sympathy beside.

In short Mr. Mildman was the lion of the town, but lion as he was, he found himself a captive either to a silken, or a golden chain, either to Cupid or cupidity. Perhaps his service was divided between the two ; but at any rate he *fancied* himself in love, and the object of his devotion was no other than our coquettish little beauty.

Mr. Mildman kept his own secret. His knowledge of human nature told him he was not the man to win the affections of a gay girl in the first flush of youthful beauty ; and he knew, too, that he is more sure to win who defers rather than precipitates his wooing. So he was content to bide his time, and determined to set a careful guard over a prize so well worth securing, which his intimacy with Mr. Harding enabled him to do, though not to his entire satisfaction. He kept watch of each gaudy flutterer around his lady's bower, and managed to clip the pinions of such as attracted her eye, sometimes by well-guarded hints to the easily alarmed parent, and sometimes through other means more ingenious than fair. Yet for all these precautions he was ill at ease, and cast about him for some additional way of guarding his dearest treasure.

The change which had taken place in Alice had not escaped his notice nor failed to increase his uneasiness. Mr. Harding himself spoke to him of it, and he judiciously advised quiet and retirement for the supposed invalid. Hearing Lisbet mentioned in this connection, it occurred to him that he might make use of the girl in forwarding his plans, but he determined to observe her closely and acquaint himself with her character before intrusting her with such a weighty commission. This he had ready opportunities of doing, for she was in the habit of coming to him for spiritual advice and instruction.

He was soon convinced that the girl was admirably suited to his purpose, and one day, when she came on her accustomed errand, he commenced operations by kindly inquiring into the health of the family.

"I grieve to hear that thy young mistress is not well, at least her father's anxieties lead him to fear so, as he tells me."

A smile lurked around the corners of Lisbet's mouth as she answered that "Mistress Alice was not so gay and light-hearted as she used to be."

"It were pity that one so young should have cause for sorrow, other than that we should all feel for our shortcomings."

(Now Lisbet was in her way an example of piety. So great indeed was her zeal, that none of her neighbors faults escaped her notice, and few conducted themselves with sufficient propriety to avoid shocking her moral sense. So anxious was she to correct the errors of all the rest of the world that she usually overlooked her own, and never allowed an opportunity of upholding the right and condemning the wrong to pass by.)

"Oh, your Worship! there's nobody loves my young lady better than I do, and nobody is more blind-like to her failures (excepting her fond parent, may be, which is naturally born blind to children's faults, though my own father was not, as the chastisers of my childhood can bear witness, and I thank him for them now with all my heart, though I did n't relish 'em at the time),

and I wish I could say it was penitence for her sins that made her so quiet and staid. But alas, sir, I could not say it, no, not in conscience and speaking truth, as I hope my lips may always do, or forever after hold their peace. No, sir, it's not regeneration that ails my young lady."

"And what dost thou think it is, Lisbet? If there be aught upon her mind, her friends should share the burden, or perhaps they might relieve her of it altogether."

"Not very easy, sir! I've seen such cases afore. It's a heart complaint, if I don't mistake, your Worship."

"Lisbet!" exclaimed the minister in well-feigned alarm (for he understood the girl's meaning perfectly). "A complaint of the heart, and her father ignorant of it? This must never be! She shall have medical advice immediately!"

"It would n't do her a bit of good, sir. All the doctors in the world can't cure that disease I've heard tell. Young ladies (and gentlemen, too, is likewise victims) are very liable to it, but they generally outlive it, sir."

"Speak plainly, my good girl. Thy hints alarm me."

"Why, sir, the upshot of the matter is, that Mistress Alice has fell in love, according as my suspicion goes."

"Ah, indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Mildman with some show of surprise and a good deal of real anxiety, "that is not so bad as I feared, and yet it may be a great

deal worse. Hast thou mentioned thy suspicions to any one else, Lisbet?"

"Not a living soul! Not even to Mr. Harding, though he asked my opinion, and being taken aback like, I told him, perhaps it was your edifying discourses, your honor. I should n't have betrayed my lady's secrets to mortal ears, only I was aware from personal experiments, that in case of no return of sentiment, there's a refuge in religion. Some takes to it as a last resort when nothing else will move their stubborn hearts, and this, may be, is a special Providence to bring Miss Alice in. I thought if it should turn out so fortunate, that you would be the very one to point the way out to her, and so I longed to tell you about it and get it off my mind, sir."

"Lisbet," said the minister gravely, "thou didst not well to utter a deception to her father, although it was judicious not to reveal the truth. I have seen instances where premature opposition from a parent has driven matters to an unfortunate crisis; therefore it is better Mr. Harding should remain in ignorance for the present. It is in my power to act the part of a friend to both parent and child in the matter, and in thine too, if thou art ruled by discretion."

"I'm none of your boasters, sir, but you might go a day's journey and find none discreeter. Men is very fond of saying that our sex can't keep secrets, but that's a label that they ought to have pasted on their own

tongues for accusin' innocence. Hows'ever you may try me and judge for yourself, your Excellency."

"Well, my girl, I like not many words, but doubtless thou wilt be cautious in this matter."

"La, sir! there is n't a closer mouthed person in all Boston town. Nobody says fewer words; and indeed I'm no ways fond of lettin' my tongue run, I warrant you."

"It is necessary to know the object of thy lady's affection, in order to discern whether it be a worthy one or no."

"Oh, I've took care of that! I have my suspicions there, too, but can't be certain quite yet. No longer ago than last Sabbath I sees a soldier-like gentleman, a stranger, sir, and the minute I set eyes on him, says I, that's the object! I shouldn't a been gazing round the church (though I did keep a sharp eye on the service) except for feelin' it a duty-like to guard my dear young lady, being motherless, and it falls on me to have a care over her youth. I'm young enough myself to be talking so, too, but experience is better than age, much better, and I've had sights of that any way."

"I have seen the youth thou speakest of, and fear there is too much ground for thy surmises. He wears the look of a worldly man, and hath a dangerous aspect."

"He is just the one, sir, to take my lady's eye. She

never favors the meek and the humble. Not she! I'll know if it's yon wolf in lamb's clothing before I sleep this night, sir!"

"And be cautious in thy communications to me. It must not appear that we have any secret matter between us. Go now, good Lisbet, keep a guard on thy lips, and what thou doest, do it in love and meekness."

Lisbet hastened home and was (opportunely for her purpose) summoned to assist at her lady's toilet. "Now," thought she, "here is an excellent opportunity, nothing could be better!" And taking the long, fair tresses in her hand, and placing herself so as to secure a view of her mistress' face as she sat before the mirror, with no little address she cautiously approached the subject by speaking of the talented young minister, whose eloquence had turned so many transgressors from their sinful ways. Alice sat silent with her eyes fixed on vacancy, paying little heed to Lisbet's edifying comments.

"He is a chosen saint, is Mr. Mildman, and I know of more than one lovely lady that's half dead only for love of him."

"Fie on thee, Lisbet! Thou dost belie our sex's modesty!"

"Never a whit, mistress, for what can ladies do but love such a dear soul, and not to blame for what they can't help, neither! If I had the making of woman-kind there should be nothing but a cold, hard stone

in the place where the heart is put now. But heigh ho! men is so cruel they 'd be sure to invent a new way of breaking it in two. Indeed, my dear lady, I could name names if I would, but I can keep a secret, that I can. I'm no mischief-maker; not I, thank heaven!"

"Thou shouldst never credit a story to thy neighbor's hurt, good Lisbet."

Lisbet pouted at this rebuke, and muttered that she thought it "no great harm for a lady to be in love if she chose to be. Indeed," she added, "there's a handsome young stranger come to town, and if I'm not mistaken he'll break more hearts with his lovely black eyes than I have fingers on my two hands this minute."

At this mention of the stranger, Alice started so suddenly from her seat that the comb was jerked from Lisbet's hand and cast upon the floor. The girl, now in high glee at her discovery, apologized for running the comb into her sweet head, which was doubtless the cause of her starting in that violent way. "And to think, my dear lady, that I should hurt you so as to bring all the blood in your body into your face and neck in a moment!" and having accomplished her design so successfully she thought it best to say no more, at this time, on the subject.

CHAPTER VI.

"ALICE! Alice, my girl! come down, I say, and give thy welcome to the son of my dear friend Ned Stanley. What have I been about that I saw him not until now, and he never knew that my home was here! A fine story, truly, that the boy should be loitering around the town for so long and I never know a breath of it, and he a stranger all this time, to be sure, when he should have been like our own!"

At the word "stranger," something seemed to whisper Alice that this was the unknown, which intimation threw her upon her guard, and she received Edward Stanley with a calm and placid dignity, that betrayed no signs of a former recognition.

Mr. Harding's pleasure at the meeting was great, although damped by intelligence of the death of his valued friend, the father of our hero. The evening was spent mostly in reminiscences of their past lives, and at its close Mr. Harding said, as he laid his hand familiarly on Edward's shoulder, "Well, well, my boy, right glad I am to see thee. Thou shalt find us no strangers to hospitality in this New World. Remem-

ber thy claim on me is one of long standing ; forget I am not thy parent and ask of me what favors I can command."

Thus were these young and susceptible persons thrown together, and thus as the most natural, and under the circumstances, inevitable consequence, a mutual attachment soon followed. And yet no suspicion of the truth flashed across the mind of Mr. Harding, though had Alice at that time permitted her lover to lay the subject before him he would no doubt have given his delighted consent to their union, when the proper time should arrive.

Edward often importuned her for permission to do so, but she earnestly besought him to delay. "No, no, not yet," she would say, "papa will only tell thee to wait until thy beard shall grow, or perhaps he will advise a journey to Europe, and then I shall lose thee altogether."

For awhile nothing could exceed Mr. Harding's kindness, but ere long his manner toward Edward became constrained and embarrassed, and soon a decided coldness was perceptible. Edward's conscience smote him sorely for his want of candor, and he now represented to Alice that it was the abuse of his friend's hospitality that had forfeited him his esteem, but she was unaccountably averse to acquainting her father with their circumstances, and still begged for a short delay until his groundless prejudice should have time

to wear off. At last, Edward, unable to fathom the mystery of her conduct, or longer to endure the changed looks of Mr. Harding, came to the house but seldom, and then he was forced to behold the tears of his lady-love and to listen to her tender reproaches. It was now she accused him of becoming weary of her love, and the fabric of their golden dream was threatened by internal storms and mutual loss of confidence.

In all this unhappiness Mr. Mildman's agency may readily be detected. He was kept faithfully informed of every step made in the affair, and the conduct of Alice was influenced in a great measure by him, through the girl's representations. By feigning the warmest sympathy with her lady she easily won her confidence, and became the repository of all her hopes and fears. And Mr. Mildman, while he professed the greatest friendship for young Stanley, did not hesitate to carry on a system of deception with both him and Mr. Harding, poisoning the mind of the latter against him in so insidious a manner as completely to screen himself from any suspicion of malice, and at the same time always careful to say nothing against the former which Mr. Harding could take hold of as a tangible accusation.

The early training of Alice was not calculated to fit her for the crosses of life. She had been the petted child, the flattered maiden, the honored and absolute

mistress of her father's household, and she expected to pass through life, receiving the homage of affection (as a matter of course) without contradiction. Over the minds with which she had hitherto come in contact, she had held unlimited sway.

In short her will had outgrown her reason, and she by no means relished the wholesome prunings of the former, although necessary to the health and perfect development of the latter.

She looked upon Edward's course as one calculated to bring her to terms, and rebellious pride came to the rescue of her wounded affections.

Lisbet saw this, and aptly encouraged the feeling, "Indeed, my lady," she would say, "man is a natural tyrant. La, bless you now, what kind of a lover is it that can't give up to a body ; and what will he do when he's a husband ? Mercy on me ! I'd as lief live with a ragin' lion ! When a body knows for certain, as you do, my dearest lady, that your father (which you're bound in love and duty to obey, though you're not obliged to render obedience to a lover, leastways not *before* marriage), that your father is bent agin the thing, and would say 'No,' slap down, and like enough forbid him to look on your sweet, lovely face again ; why, I say, if such a lover persists in askin', he only *wants* to be said 'No' to."

Yet after all Lisbet was misled in her deductions, for she was ignorant of the depth of her lady's affection,

regarding it as a fitful fancy which would soon pass away and be replaced by another, perhaps still more fleeting.

But there were times when all Alice's tenderness returned, and when, no human eye beholding her, she wept sadly over her vanishing dream, and bitterly blamed herself as the sole cause of her own and Edward's misery. Then again she was gay and cheerful as ever, her naturally hopeful spirit bearing her up and picturing to her eye a bright and happy future.

In fact Edward and herself were becoming daily more estranged, and Mr. Mildman began to flatter himself that the breach between them was almost past healing. Mr. Harding's home was no longer the pleasant scene of other days, for constraint had crept in between parent and child, which both felt painfully, though neither seemed to know the remedy. The society of the young minister became almost necessary as a cloak to conceal their discomfort, and Alice rejoiced that her father had such a friend, both on his own account, and because it left her more at liberty, and Mr. Mildman found many opportunities of diverting her attention from herself in such a manner as to render his companionship almost desirable even to her.

This was the condition of their affairs at the time when the acquaintance between Edith and Alice commenced, and, though with characters so widely differing, they found in each other's society a rare and delightful attraction.

CHAPTER VII.

LISBET had now gained an unfortunate ascendancy over her mistress' mind. She even persuaded her that she was deserted by her lover, and not only so, but that his devotion was proffered at another shrine. Meanwhile, Mr. Mildman continued gradually gaining ground with the fair one, in whose mind the love of coquetry threatened to take the place of a once purer and brighter flame. Encouraged by her treacherous maid, she at last resolved to try if jealousy would not bring back the truant lover to her feet. The minister being the only convenient person at hand, would serve as a safe object on whom she might play off this innocent device. Now this was exactly the plan Mr. Mildman had arranged for her, "for," said he, "let her only give me so fair a pretext, and the prize is all my own."

Poor Alice ; poor, silly little fly !

As we said before, Edward occasionally came to visit her and she lost no time in showing off this new game before him. Apparently she scarcely noticed his first looks of wonder, then of pain, although in secret her

heart beat with new hopes as she read their language ; and the minister, on his part, received her favors with the humility of conscious unworthiness, not presuming to interpret them as more than gratifying marks of kindness. This encouraged her to proceed still further, and the infatuated girl, blinded by ill advice, exulted in the unhappiness she was causing.

And now another motive urged her on, as we have seen in the last interview with the unfortunate Edith. Mr. Mildman fearing the opportunity might slip by, began cautiously to build upon the favor so graciously accorded, which Alice excused herself for, on the ground that he had interfered in her affairs. The charge, however, was but a random stroke, for in reality she saw no reason for the accusation.

Thus then we leave her, secure in her own resources, hopeful, and sometimes trustful, and herself unconsciously unjust, unfair, and bent upon her own destruction.

To return after this long digression, to our story. Full of her new scheme for making the influence of the minister serve her friend, Alice on the following day equipped herself for a walk and took the way on which she was most sure of meeting Mr. Mildman. Her expectations were not disappointed, and an unusually gracious "good-morrow" soon brought him to her side.

It was considered in that prudent time an act of high indiscretion for a youth to be permitted to escort a

maiden in her walk ; and indeed the least approach to familiar intercourse between the sexes was regarded as inconsistent with religious gravity and womanly reserve. And more than this : grave magistrates discussed these sad offenses, and while the affrighted culprits stood before them, decided upon the penalty to be inflicted upon him who had the temerity to approach his profane lips too near the sanctuary of a lovely cheek, which, willing and unresisting bent to the salute, like the rose that bows her head to the kisses of the bold though trembling dew-drops. Yet we know of no time in the annals of the past when that naughty little rogue, Cupid, did not elude the attacks of his most bitter enemies ; and doubtless even in that day the downcast eye and blushing cheeks told the same tale as now, while the enamored youth, watchful of his opportunity, whispered in honeyed words his welcome and heart-stirring avowal.

But the minister of that day was a privileged individual, and walked above suspicion. And so Mr. Mildman kept the place he had taken by the side of Alice, and (I fear) did not confine his attention to the subject of his legitimate ministration.

“Fair Alice, it well pleases me to see thee with that bright bloom on thy cheeks this morning. Thy sickness could not have been severe which deprived us of thy company but last evening.”

The bloom deepened a little as Alice answered that

it was only a slight indisposition that had annoyed her.

"May I inquire if thine errand is one of charity to the poor, though praiseworthy gossip Golden?"

Alice thought that her errand *was* one of charity, though not perhaps to the worthy gossip, and she replied, that she "did purpose going that way."

"She doth speak well in praise of thy bounty to her, and of thy other virtues, also."

"Nay, an' she speaks so, it is not well but ill. It pleases me to see her this morning, and I merit no praise for the deed."

"Thou doest thyself injustice, gentle one. Indeed I have often noted thee, and admired thy womanly bearing and wisdom beyond thy tender years."

"Call me not wise, I pray you, for wisdom is a grace I covet not. It doth but bring frowns and wrinkles to the brow, and heaviness to the heart, I ween."

"It doth bring gravity, fair Alice; but wisdom is a heavenly gift, and much to be desired. What, without wisdom, should guide our councils in these dark and troublous times, or keep our church firmly knit together amid so many strifes and dissensions?"

"I am but a silly girl, yet I would be so rather than a man and have wisdom. For, speak of it as you will, it doth often harden the heart and lead to cruelty."

"Nor would I have thee other than thou art—a fair and lovely woman, inclining to pity rather than to just-

ice, and excusing the transgressions which it is our sterner duty to punish."

"Nay, Mr. Mildman, I am not such a silly girl that I can relish naught but flattery; and as for man, he is too often harsh and cruel, and then calls his deeds by the names of duty and justice."

"I know it is sometimes so; and the influence of woman's gentleness is needed to subdue our less yielding nature. Dear lady, I will be thy pupil, and thou shalt tutor me as thou wilt."

"I spoke but of civil rule, and doubtless my words were idle. But it was only yesterday that methought there was talk of some poor wretch whose life was forfeit to these same unyielding laws. I pray you tell me what was the sin for which he must so dearly suffer?"

"Was it of these stubborn heretics, the Quakers, that the talk ran? I know of none other under so deep a shadow at this time."

"Oh, yes; now I remember me, it was so, and my foolish heart sank at the thought of blood. I trust my father has naught to do therewith, for it would grieve me to feel myself shrink from his caresses, which I know right well I should do were his hand darkened with that hateful stain."

"Oh! Alice, talk not so wildly, I entreat thee! Thy father has the peace and welfare of our infant colony at heart, and he doth with his ripened judgment, wisely assist in framing laws for its protection."

"But is it not in Holy Writ, that they who rule shall do so in love and meekness?"

"It is; and we have tried milder means to check this froward people, but in vain. What then is left us but to enforce the laws, and preserve our rising congregation from the contagious influence of this great danger?"

"Alas! it is a hard and unchristianlike thing for men to take each other's lives thus, and I marvel at their cruelty. Surely all in the council spake not for blood? Was there none to uphold you when *you* spoke, as was fitting in the servant of God, for milder measures?"

"Alice, I fear to lose thy favor, yet I spoke as I thought fitting in God's servant, in behalf of my defenseless flock. For it is my task to watch over them like a careful shepherd, and to cry out against the wolf, heresy, which prowls about our pastures, and seeks to lead the tender lambs astray."

"Now, indeed, I see it all. It was through you that my father gave his voice for blood! I did wonder that his tender heart had not rather erred in mercy. You can not gainsay it? Well, I see. I will hasten home and entreat him to wash his hands of this most dangerous matter."

"Alice, Alice, hearken but a moment! Thou dost mistake me, indeed thou dost. The act has already cost me many a pang, for I knew not it would seem so

hard and grievous. Believe me it was done in too much haste, and I have since feared it may lead to ill."

"And do you, indeed, repent that it was done?"

"I do, I do—in that it displeases thee."

"Not for my sake, but for your own I would see you, as God's minister, the friend of the suffering and unfortunate; the mild pleader in their behalf, and not their unrelenting judge. This, indeed, were meet for the followers of our meek and lowly Master. But my father? I can not rest while this fearful weight is on him, and I must hold you still in condemnation until your influence has undone the work it wrought in him."

"And when I have done thy bidding, fair one, what reward, I pray thee, shall be mine?"

"The reward of a quiet mind, of sweet, untroubled dreams, and the blessings of the poor and defenseless."

"And naught beside?"

"My father shall thank you for saving him from the pains of remorse, and my gratitude shall be measured with your merits."

"Alice, as many commands as thou layest upon me, consistent with my sacred calling, shall be executed. Only tell me wherein I may pleasure thee and thou shalt find me as tender and meek-hearted, yea, as *loving* as thyself canst wish!"

"Oh! no, it is not for my pleasure, but as a duty you owe to God and to your brethren." And now she

stood upon the step at the worthy gossip's door, ready to dismiss the minister with a parting farewell, but he detained her a moment with these words :

"Dear Alice, I entreat thee to bear in mind that matrimony is a holy condition, to which we are commended in the sacred volume."

"Far too holy with thee," soliloquized the laughing girl, as she closed the door somewhat hastily behind her, leaving the minister standing on the outside, quite sanguine of the progress he had made in her favor.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON the evening of this eventful day, about the time when we left poor Edith struggling with the waves for her life, Alice stole away from her own quiet home to seek a few moments' converse with her friend. Her usual summons to the door was, to her surprise, unanswered, and finding it unfastened, with a foreboding fear she pushed it open and entered. Looking eagerly into every room, and seeing neither of its inmates, she thought for a few moments that they had been persuaded to quit the scene of their danger and escape to a kindlier home. She sought for some parting token of Edith's love, "for," said she, while tears of regret chased each other down her cheeks, "the sweet girl would not have left her friend without some sign of affection." The next moment, however, convinced her that she was mistaken, for every thing about the house betokened their expected return. On the table was an open book, and the old man's spectacles lay upon its page, the chair on which he usually sat was pushed aside as if he had but that moment arisen therefrom. In Edith's chamber things wore their accustomed as-

pect. Here stood her embroidery frame, and in the silken fabric was her needle with its half-used thread.

Alice wondered what should keep them abroad at this late hour, for John Morrison's health was so feeble that he rarely exposed himself to the chill evening dews. She would not allow herself to think of the possibility of her friend having become the inhabitant of a prison, and hoping every minute would bring the wanderers home, she waited until the shadows took imaginary shapes of fear, then reluctantly turning to go, she fled with hasty steps and anxious heart toward her own dwelling.

But upon nearly reaching it, she heard the sounds of an unusual disturbance in the street through which she was obliged to pass, and wishing to screen herself from view, she took hasty refuge in a dark alley, from which she could observe what was going on. She was rejoiced to find that she had escaped the annoyance of being thrown among a boisterous and disorderly crowd, but what was her terror at beholding in the center of the throng, and securely guarded to prevent escape, no less a person than John Morrison himself, who, completely aroused from his accustomed serenity, addressed himself to those nearest him in earnest tones and with supplicating gestures. Her next look was for Edith, but she saw her not, and the jests and hootings of the mob prevented her catching the words that fell with passionate energy from the lips of the distracted father.

Her first impulse was to rush forth and inquire for her friend, but fear kept her concealed, and she was enabled to learn something of her fate from the remarks of the passers-by.

"Here is a Quaker fairly quaking, and a goodly sight it is to see," said one.

"What says he?" asked another; "does he beg for mercy, as he ought, or is he raving about the hirelings and the priests of Baal?"

"He is doing neither, goodman, but crying out lustily for one he calls 'Edith.' I know not who it is; his gossip, may be."

"No, no; it is his daughter, a promising branch of heresy. Why did n't they bring her along too and hang them both up together?"

"Nay; I hear the Evil One has her soul already. He took her off, body and bones, this blessed day."

"And now he says they have robbed him of his child, eh? Well, an' they had, it were a goodly thing."

"It would be giving back an imp to Satan to let him have her again. He's no fit person to have the rearing of a young one."

"Drowned! did you say? Alack! how was it, goodman?"

"Alack! and why alack, pray? Yes; I say drowned, neighbor."

"How was it, how was it, neighbor Goodenough?"

"It is said that hearing her father was a prisoner

and would be hanged, she ran down to the bay and did throw herself into the water."

"It were no cause of wonder that the man should be distressed, for they say these Quakers have feeling, for all their straight-facedness."

"The brutes have as much, I warrant me."

"Poor man," said a tender-hearted father, "an' it were so that his daughter is drowned, I am right sorely grieved for him."

"Hush, fool!" answered his goodwife, as she poked him with her elbow, "none of that, if thou wouldst not feel the lash on thy back, standing at yonder post. Thou knowest 'tis sin to pity those ranting heretics."

"Here comes Joe Makefast; I had the whole story from him. Come, Joe, tell thy tale. What was it about the drowning?"

"The drowning, eh? Why, simply this, that there was a woman drowned. I had it of one who should know—an eye-witness."

"And what said the witness, good Joe. Tell us, pray."

"Why, he says this: He saw a woman standing on the ridge out yonder, and thought he heard screams. It was near dark, and what he did not see he guessed at. But she leaped into the water in a mad, frantic-like way, and that was the last he saw of her. It was so far out she could never reach the shore alive, and most like was dashed on some of them sharp rocks and killed

outright. And now yon old dotard misses his daughter, and they do say it was no other but she. I hope it was, rather than an honest body."

Alice had heard enough to fill her with horror and dismay. She scarcely waited for the crowd to pass by to issue from her hiding-place and fly to her own chamber in breathless haste. The night was spent in an agony of grief and distraction. Her friend was doubtless gone, and the poor old father's fate scarcely less certain. Her heart ached for him, and she strove to devise a way to comfort him. Suddenly she thought of Mr. Mildman's promise, and determined to move him in behalf of the prisoner. Then again she dreaded placing herself in his power so much as to tell him her connection with these unhappy persons. So she decided at last that she would herself go to the prison and confer with John Morrison upon the subject. At any rate, he should know that he was not alone in his distress. Toward evening she summoned Lisbet, and informed her of her intention of visiting the prison at nightfall, and directed her to furnish some disguise for them both.

Lisbet's surprise at the announcement was very great, although it did not equal the alarm she felt when she learned that the Quaker and his daughter were both well known to her mistress, and that the latter had been her dearest and most familiar friend. She earnestly remonstrated against so rash an under-

taking, but in vain. Lisbet had never been in such a quandary. She could not now hasten to Mr. Mildman for advice, for although she had acted the spy in the love affair, so faithfully, *this* was another matter and might involve very serious consequences. She knew that the sin of offering kindness to one of that hated sect, was accounted almost as great as that of belonging to their number; and it would never do for the minister, of all persons, to know it, for aside from other considerations, Lisbet began to suspect that his motives were not quite so disinterested as she had at first supposed, and the knowledge of her young lady's last and fatal step might lose her the honor that was in store, of one day becoming the wife of so distinguished an individual. Beside, the danger to herself was not her last thought; but she had little time to deliberate, and at the appointed hour found herself standing with her mistress at the prison-door.

Alice was well screened from view in her full cloak and close-fitting hood and velvet mask, and she stood quietly in the shadow of the door-way, while Lisbet parleyed with the gruff but kind-hearted jailor.

"Joseph, I have come to ask a favor of thee."

"Ah, ha, thou hast, eh? Thou needst not ask it then, for I have favored thee too much already, thou graceless girl."

"Oh, very well! I know of one that will. So good-by to thee, thou cross, ill-favored man!"

"Don't hurry, don't hurry now. Let's see what it is, Lisbet. In a scrape, girl? Come now, tell me. I can keep secrets tight as well as some other things."

"Joseph, I know thee for a discreet and kind soul, but thou hast not caught me in a scrape, but a poor friend of mine here," and lowering her voice she whispered—"one of the heretic gang, come to tell yon old dotard of his daughter. Let her in, Joseph, dear, out of pity."

"Thou makest friends with the heretics, dost thou? That is well! The governor shall hear of it in less than an hour, and I shall have thee here in my nice little box. Ha, ha," said he, rubbing his hands, "why now, would n't that be right pleasant. Would n't it, eh?"

"No, indeed, Joe. I'd make trouble for thee. Thou'd be only too glad to open the door and let me out of thy hearing."

"Hark, Lisbet, thou wouldst make a goodly show with thy head through yonder nice-fitting aperture and the lash waving over thy fair shoulders. And who but Joe Makefast will husband thee after thy fine elevation. Answer me that, sweetheart, answer me!"

"Have done, Joe, and let this poor damsel in. I risk much in befriending her, but my tender heart was storm-stayed when I found her crying out here under the wall! I told her I knew thee for a good soul and had some knowledge of thee, such as a modest maid

may have with one of thy sex, and would speak a kind word for her with thee."

"Well, go along in; but remember thou shalt marry me for this, or my name's not Joe Makefast. Yon old man is sore distressed, and if thy friend—I say *thy friend*, Lisbet—has comfort for him, she's welcome to bring it along. Here, this way, this way."

As they entered the cell where the prisoner was confined, he raised his head from the table upon which it leaned and at the sight of Alice's muffled figure, started forward with a look of eager questioning. But as she threw off her mask and lifted her agitated face to his, he turned away with a deep groan of disappointment, but the next moment hastily inquired if she had brought him any tidings of *her*?"

"Alas! I have naught wherewith to comfort thee, but am come hoping to hear something of her fate and to tell thee that there is one who grieves with thee—that thou art not alone in thy sorrows."

"I thank thee, my child, I thank thee. Thou, too, didst love my gentle one, and thy tears are as balm to my soul. There is little left on earth for me now. I am a crushed and broken-hearted man and feel that my spirit nears its home. This is my chief joy; yet it warms me still to feel thy sympathy. May our Parent above reward thee for this kindness!"

As soon as Alice could speak for weeping, she informed the prisoner that her errand was in part to

confer with him as to the best means to be used in obtaining his release, or if that should be impossible, to take some measures to secure his comfort in the jail, which his delicate state of health rendered necessary.

"Again, I thank thee, Alice, though it matters not. My days here are numbered, and it is little hurt my bitterest enemy can do me now. Bodily comforts bring not mental ease, but rather leave the mind more free to dwell upon its misery. Farewell, my child, and do not risk thy own safety in coming here again. At yonder bar, Alice, under thy name shall be written, 'I was sick and in prison and she visited me.'"

Unable to speak her farewell, Alice took the old man's hand in her own and pressed it to her lips, then turned to leave the cell. But just at this moment the key grated in the lock, the door swung upon its hinges, the terrified face of the jailor looked in and was withdrawn, and in another instant Mr. Mildman, mute with astonishment, stood before her.

Alice returned the minister's looks of surprise with too much grief and sympathy in her mind to leave room for any anxiety on her own account; while Lisbet, deeply mortified at being discovered by the dear saint whose counsels were her especial delight, put the corner of her apron into her eye and began to sob and bewail her misfortune. Mr. Mildman in a low voice begged Alice to dismiss her handmaid, adding that he himself would see her safely home.

"Thou mayest go, Lisbet, and should my father inquire for me, tell him—"

"That thy mistress is under my protection and will soon be with him."

Lisbet courtesied low as she reluctantly passed through the door, near which, however, she purposed remaining, doubtless in order to catch the pearls of wisdom she expected would fall from his gifted lips, but it happened that the blessed youth read somewhat more deeply into her thoughts than she intended, for he followed her forth and saw her safely beyond all danger of eaves-dropping. In the passage she encountered her friend the unlucky keeper, upon whom she vented her disappointment with some asperity.

"Get along with thee, thou fool, and never say thou lovest me after bringing the godly man upon me in this fashion. But what should I expect? for never yet did I know of a man that had any wit at his fingers ends. No it's we weak vessels that holds out in a storm!"

"There now, Lisbet, an' I were thy husband I might consent to be hen-pecked, so please thee to wait a little for that now. Did n't I cough, and hem, and wink at thee to keep behind the door, and slip out when the minister's back was turned? But no, thou'd not see me, not thou! It was all eyes for his reverence, and none for me. I did my best, so spare me, now duckling, I pray thee."

"Duckling, forsooth! When I choose to be a fowl it shall be one with a sharp bill, and afool of thine eyes thou 'lt find me, thou stupid dolt! Couldst thou not have locked the dear soul (always with reverence), into another cell right quickly; and as soon as thou hadst let us out, discover thy error with a goodly show of penitence?"

"Sweet Lisbet, when thou be'est my help-meet thou shalt teach me such tricks of jugglery. But come now and look more cheery or thy sadness will be like to break my poor heart in twain."

"More like to break thy head by far. Go along and unlock yon iron gate that I may get me away from the sight of thee."

"Not a peg do I stir till thou give me a kind word, and the minister is coming too and shall catch thee again, else—"

"Oh dear, good Joe, open the door, I pray thee. I did but yesterday scout Job Hobnail for thy sake. Hasten!"

"Well, say thou dost hate Job, say it now, Lisbet."

"I do indeed, come now—"

"And dost affect me."

"I am heart-sick for thee, indeed I am!"

"Nay now, thou art joking."

"Not a whit! Sweet Joe, the minister comes, let me forth."

"Well, go along, and remember thou art pledged to me!"

"I'll pledge myself now never to get into thy clutch again, thou villian, so good-by to thee, Joseph Make-fast—that can't *keep* fast," and the deceitful Lisbet disappeared around the nearest corner.

CHAPTER IX.

As Alice walked homeward by Mr. Mildman's side she related, at his request, the circumstances of her first acquaintance with Edith, and the object she had in view in her visit to the prisoner.

"One pleasant afternoon I strayed down to the beach and climbed out upon the rocks that overhang the water, leaping from stone to stone, until I had gone some distance from the shore. Not sufficiently heeding where I stepped I placed my foot upon a slippery stone and fell over the side of quite a steep rock, into the water. In falling I caught at the branch of a shrub, which fortunately grew from a fissure in the rock, and thus my head was kept above the water. It seemed to me a long time before any answer to my screams was heard. The water chilled me and the weight of my clothing dragged me downward, and I was about to let go my friendly shrub in despair, when to my great joy I heard a voice bidding me keep a firm hold a moment longer. Soon a cord or band, made of portions of clothing torn into strips, was let down to me from above. In the end of it was a loop through

which I was directed to pass my head and arms. This I did, by holding with one hand at a time to the branch. My friend exerted all her strength to draw me upward, and I endeavored to assist myself by taking hold of such bushes and rocky projections as offered themselves to my hands. On reaching the top of the rock, I fainted from the effects of fright and exhaustion, and upon recovering, found my head pillowed on Edith's bosom, and her hands bathing my temples with cool water. It was to this brave girl I owed my poor life, and who can blame me for loving her and wishing to afford her father some little comfort in his distress?"

"I am myself too much in her debt to blame thee. But why heard I not this tale before? I never knew thy precious life was so nearly lost to all who love thee."

"It was at her request I kept the secret. She dreaded being brought into notice, on her father's account chiefly, and I promised her to reveal it to none, unless I could one day save her by doing so. And now the time is come, and my father shall hear the story ere I slumber."

"Let me counsel thee to remain silent for the present. Since our conversation yesterday, I am more than ever convinced that the present course pursued toward this people is an injudicious one, and only last evening I opened the subject with thy father, whose tender conscience I find easily turned to a course of

more lenience. I can accomplish thy kind wishes the more readily, methinks, than if he knew of these circumstances, for, perchance, he might be moved with anger against these Quakers for encouraging thy friendship, as thou knowest, Alice, he would blame any other than thyself. Therefore set thy mind at ease concerning this aged man, for I will procure him both bodily comforts and spiritual counsel, and, perchance, may be favored to rescue him as a brand from the burning. Remember, also, that thou hast my promise to serve thee, and hesitate not to claim my service in any future emergency."

According to his promise, Mr. Mildman's influence in the council was exerted in behalf of the prisoner, and through these means he was furnished with a comfortable apartment, and allowed the use of "wholesome books," and the freedom of the jail yard. However, he seemed to take but little note of these privileges, for, although his grief was silent, it was deep and absorbing, and, indeed, he was too much of an invalid to enjoy them. Alice was not again permitted to visit him, but she found opportunities, through Mr. Mildman, to furnish him with many little comforts and delicacies. He was grateful for the efforts made to alleviate his distress, but firmly rejected the spiritual counsels of Mr. Mildman.

Mr. Harding could not but see that something was upon his daughter's mind. But he was persuaded by

her altered treatment of the minister, that she felt a growing kindness toward him. It delighted him greatly to observe her preference for him over young Stanley, for at one time he feared she felt too much interest in that "graceless boy."

Alice tried her best to conceal her distress, and to appear cheerful and happy in her father's presence, and when he saw her fits of abstraction, he said to himself: "It will all be well, soon! I see, I see—the girl's in love, though she don't know it yet, and my reverend young friend is wise in waiting for the proper time to ask my sanction. The little puss is troubled in her conscience. She knows she has no right to fall in love without my permission; but she has it, she has it, and a goodly pair it will be. I shall have my child with me still, and son Mildman will only be here a little more, that's all!"

CHAPTER X.

THE grief of Alice at the loss of her friend was not alleviated by the fact that of late she had seen nothing of Edward Stanley. While under the anxiety of providing for the comfort of the sick and aged prisoner, and the excitement caused by Edith's disappearance, she lost sight of the probable consequences of her growing intimacy with Mr. Mildman; but as soon as quiet brought her time for reflection, she was struck with dismay at finding herself entangled in a web, partly of her own weaving, and helplessly, almost hopelessly, did she confess to herself that she was about to become the victim of her own well-arranged scheming. The remonstrances of her friend against so dangerous a course, now recurred to her, and that earnest and solemn warning seemed to return like a voice from the tomb. "How," she asked herself, "shall I answer this to Edward? how convince him of my unswerving affection?"

As if to escape from these thoughts, and hoping chance might throw her in his way, she went forth, little heeding whither. Unconsciously led by her feel-

ings, she wandered to a quiet spot where they had sometimes met. It was a shady cedar-grove, through which ran a rippling stream. Looking about her, to her joy she espied a manly form leaning against a tree. It was her own Edward. His back was toward her, and he was apparently absorbed in meditation. With a light step she flew to his side, and, laying her hand upon his arm, looked up into his face with a joyful smile. He raised his head, and without otherwise changing his position, he returned her greeting with a cold and steady gaze. His face was pale and sad, but did not express displeasure; it was something deeper she read there, that told of mental suffering. Her heart smote her, for she knew it was her doing, and, with tears in her eyes, she withdrew the untouched hand from its resting-place. He spoke, and his voice trembled with emotion :

“ Alice, you bade me trust you, and I have trusted.”

“ Edward !” she said, reproachfully, “ thou canst not doubt my love.”

“ Have I not just cause to question it ?”

“ Indeed thou hast no real cause, for my heart has never swerved from thee.”

“ Then answer me this, Alice. How stands the minister with thee ?”

She looked up quickly as if to speak, then looked down again confused, and replied that she “ desired him to stand only as a friend.”

"And are his desires as moderate as thine? Thou art silent—and yet dost thou avoid his presence?"

"I did, indeed I did, until—"

"Well?"

"Listen to me, Edward, and I will tell thee all. Thou knowest of my love for the young Quaker girl and how our affection began. Well, I saw that she to whom I did owe my life was in danger, and that there was no escape for her but through his influence—" here Alice paused again, and Edward continued—

"And it was through thee that the man of blood became the advocate for mercy. Is this so?"

"Oh, do not blame me if it be! What did I not owe to Edith, and with the power to save her or soothe her father's sorrow, wouldst thou have had me remain silent and inactive?"

"Thou didst owe her a debt of gratitude, I know; but was thy love to her so great that my happiness and thine own must needs be the sacrifice? It were indeed right to employ all just means in her behalf, but not to tamper thus with his peace of mind, with thine, and with my own."

"Alas, if I had but heeded her friendly counsel! I never thought to risk thy peace of mind, for thy happiness is my first thought—my dearest care. Look not so coldly upon me, I pray thee, for no other than thyself shall ever claim my love and duty. Not even my father's command shall move me to an union with an-

other. Edward, forgive my thoughtless errors, and let me be as I once was to thee!"

"That may never be! Thou hast erred, but I believe it was thoughtlessly, and with the hope of serving thy friend. I speak not now of the lightness of thy coquettish conduct on former occasions, for I forgive thee that, great as was the pain it caused me. But now thou art too far compromised to make an honorable retraction. I leave thee then to fulfill the expectations thou hast raised. I release thee from thy vow to me, and leave thee free to follow thy own fancy. It were better so, for all hope of thy father's acceptance of me is now vain. Thou weepst, Alice, but woman's tears are fleeting. Her smile soon chases them as the sunshine banishes the shade from yonder landscape. *My grief is too deep to pass away in tears.*"

"Edward," answered Alice, and pride spoke in her uplifted head and calmer tone, "I see thou art weary of the tie that binds us, and desirest to cast me from thee. It is *man* whose heart knows but the touch of sorrow, while woman's lies crushed and broken by his short-lived affection."

"Add not unkindness to thy folly, maiden. Thou hast trifled away the peace of one true soul, and perhaps will trample upon the happiness of another. I do not ask thee to think of me, for that will be a crime when thou art the wife of another. I will strive to banish thy image from my mind, and in the storm of

conflict with savage foes forget, if possible, the greater tumult within. Alice, forget that such a being as Edward Stanley ever crossed thy path, and be happy. Fare thee well."

She would have spoken, but her lips refused her utterance; she would have clasped the hand which for a moment held her own, but her icy fingers refused to close upon it; she would have rushed forward and thrown herself upon his bosom, but her feet were rooted to the spot whereon she stood, and he was gone.

Gone and forever, to battle, to danger, perhaps death, driven away by her. Her Edward; alas! he was her's no longer, he had cast her love from him. She sank upon her knees on the bed of withered herbage, and wrung her hands in agony. Then a hope sprung up within her bosom, he should not go, she would send for him and tell her father all, and he should do her justice. Homeward she flew, with difficulty restraining herself from running in unseemly haste along the thoroughfare. She reached her chamber, wrote him hastily a few impassioned words conjuring him to come to her, if only for a moment, ere he departed. Then she called Lisbet, and gave the note into her hand, bidding her hasten with it to Mr. Stanley.

Lisbet went forth bearing the olive branch, and she *did* hasten with it toward Mr. Mildman's dwelling. On her way thither she met young Stanley, and involuntarily she paused and hesitated. He also paused as

expecting her to accost him; but she passed on, and neither spoke. She placed the note in the hands of the minister.

"Thou hast done well, Lisbet; thou may'st go."

Lisbet returned from her errand, and her mistress inquired if she had seen Edward.

"Yes, dear lady, I did see him."

"Did he say aught to thee?"

"The young master said—'thou hast done well, Lisbet; thou may'st go.'"

This was consoling. It was an expression of pleasure at the reception of the note. He had commended her messenger for bringing it, and he would come. She was so light of heart that she seemed to walk on air. Every sound startled her and made her heart leap. Her father was delighted to see his darling so gay; it was long since he had so much enjoyed an evening. But the hours waned and her heart began to sink as they flew, and her cheeks, which in the early part of the evening had worn the brilliant hue of excitement, grew pale as death when the signal was made for retiring. As her father gave her his good-night kiss he held her in his arms a moment and gazed upon her with mingled pride and perplexity.

"Alice, thou must not let love steal all thy roses!"

She retired to her chamber, and dismissing her officious maid, mechanically prepared for bed. She did not weep, for her heart seemed frozen within her

bosom. She knelt to her accustomed prayer, and for the first time since her tiny hands were folded at her mother's knee, she could not call upon her heavenly Parent; she had no words with which to address her Maker. Then she lay down upon her bed with her hands crossed upon her bosom, and remained so still, so statue-like, that she seemed as one from whom life itself had departed.

When Lisbet came in the morning to assist at her lady's toilet she found her ill with a burning fever. Alice was weary of life, and hoped her time had come to die, but after a few days' languishing, during which no complaints passed her lips, she found herself recovering. Nothing could exceed the affectionate care which her father lavished upon her, and Mr. Mildman came several times a day with anxious inquiries. He guessed the cause of her illness, and said to himself—"It was only a passing fancy—her second love will be of more healthful growth. I may soon urge my suit now. Woman's heart ever awakes to wedded devotion."

Mr. Harding was delighted when his daughter again appeared in the sitting-room, and when he looked across the table at her pale face, he said, "the poor child is weak and languid, but she will be well soon, and then her cheerfulness will return. She is too feeble yet to receive enjoyment. I marvel that my reverend friend does not speak to me!"

Alice now took no pains to avoid the minister. She felt that she was compromised—she could never love him—but one day she might make her father happy by becoming his wife. Her morbid feelings led her to look upon herself as the victim of circumstances. She was cast off by him she loved so truly, unkindly cast off—and what remained for her but to atone for her faults in the manner pointed out to her by her former lover. Yes, she deserved to suffer this penalty and she would prepare herself for the sacrifice.

In fact, Alice looked upon life through a false medium. She had experienced the disappointment of her first blossoming hopes, and the world was now a bleak and barren place—the summer flowers were withered, and only the bitter herb of endurance left for her to taste. More than ever she now felt the loss of her dearest friend. She needed her strength to lean upon, her counsels and her tender sympathy.

CHAPTER XI.

As soon as she was able she went down to that deserted home to look once more, and perhaps for the last time, upon all that remained of Edith. As she entered the door, tender memories rushed upon her, and she sank upon a seat, overcome with sorrow. They were the first tears she had shed since her parting with Edward, and betokened the return of her feelings into healthy channels.

Suddenly she was startled by the sound of a footstep upon the threshold, and immediately a stranger entered and stood before her. His respectful bearing gave no cause for displeasure, and with a courteous air he apologized for his intrusion.

"I crave your pardon, fair maiden, but I knew not of your presence here, and felt no uncommon interest in the appearance of this deserted dwelling. I would these silent walls could tell its history."

"Could they speak they would indeed tell a tale of sadness."

"You knew somewhat of its inmates, then. Will you gratify a stranger so far as to tell me of their his-

tory? Forgive my seeming boldness, for it is no idle curiosity induces me to ask such great indulgence."

"I would first know whether it is asked in friendship or in enmity to the unfortunate."

"In friendship, doubt not, fair maiden, and with the hope of being able to serve the unfortunate—surely not to injure them."

There was a calm dignity in the bearing of her auditor which carried with it an assurance of sincerity, and Alice no longer hesitated to comply with his request. His troubled look on hearing that John Morrison was in prison bore testimony to the interest he felt in his welfare.

"This is indeed unfortunate. And his grief for Edith, was it violent?"

Alice looked up in surprise at hearing her friend's name thus familiarly spoken, and bethought her if she had mentioned Edith otherwise than as the "old man's daughter." She replied that although his grief could not be called violent, it was deep and excessive, and had wrought sorely upon his already enfeebled condition. She did not dare to mention that he was befriended in this hour of need and trial, but she could not forbear adding that she had thought herself the only friend of Edith Morrison.

The young man smiled as he replied that he had himself indulged in that delusion, and that Edith was too considerate of their safety to mention the name of

either, even to the other, since by so doing she might expose them to danger.

"And didst thou, too, know her worth and modest virtues?" she asked, as tears again started into her eyes.

"Not over well, fair lady. My acquaintance was of recent date, yours, doubtless, was of longer standing, as your grief for her loss would indicate."

"I never knew a sister's love, yet it seems to me that I must have felt it toward that sweet maiden. Thou knowest naught of her death, then?" she inquired, eagerly.

"I did know somewhat of it," was the reply.

"Oh! then, I pray thee tell it me, that I may console yon afflicted parent with sure tidings of his lost one. Grief is ever hard to bear, but mingled with uncertainty, it eateth into the heart like a cancer."

"There is no more needed to convince me that you are Edith's friend, and will not use the knowledge I impart to her injury. I will tell you all I know of the circumstance."

Alice stood leaning forward, with her hands clasped upon her bosom, and her face expressing the most intense interest, as the stranger pursued his narration.

"It was late in the evening, not more than a fortnight ago, when, as I returned from a fishing excursion, methought I heard the sound of a voice in distress coming faintly over the water. I plied my

oars with haste in the direction whence I thought it came. It was so dark that I could see nothing unless the object were very near, but after listening and watching most intently, I thought I espied a white object appearing for a moment above the surface of the water, though, ere I reached it, it was gone again. While waiting for it to reappear (if, indeed, it were not a delusion of the imagination), I suddenly felt a heavy weight upon my oar, and cautiously drawing it toward me, I found it clasped by the delicate hand of a lady. I seized the arm and drew the form still closer. The darkness prevented me seeing more than the general outline of the figure, and with much difficulty I succeeded in lifting the apparently lifeless body into my boat, and hurried toward the shore, hoping life might not yet be quite flown. My mother's dwelling was near, and I lifted the dripping form in my arms, and bore it thither. Every means to restore her were resorted to, for a long time in vain—but you are ill, dear lady! I pray you be seated!”

“No, no; heed me not, but for the love of heaven, tell me me does Edith live?”

“Prepare yourself, then, for a joyful surprise! She does; at last she gave signs of life.”

“Oh!” cried Alice, almost with a scream of joy. “She lives! my friend, my Edith! Lead me to her, I beseech thee, without a moment's delay!”

“My dear lady, your presence now, I fear, would

not benefit her. It is true she lives, although her life hangs in a trembling balance."

"I will watch beside her sick bed; my hands shall tend her with more than a sister's devotion."

"You must be patient. She has been at death's doorway, and only to-day turned her face earthward. We have not known so much as her name until now, though I heard somewhat which led me to fear her father was a prisoner, and I came forth at her earnest request to seek him. She must not know this, and how shall I answer her anxious questions concerning him?"

"Alas! I fear these glad tidings come too late to him. His health has failed rapidly since this sorrow fell upon him, and he looks upon his pilgrimage here as drawing to its close."

"Joy may do much to restore him. But how shall we contrive that he shall hear of her preservation?"

"I know of one who shall bear the intelligence to him, and, perhaps (though this I dare not securely promise), through his means the father may be permitted to visit his child. Thou mayest persuade her that for her own safety he forbears to come to her to-day."

"That is well thought of, maiden. Yet I must remind you that it is not without danger to ourselves we dare thus offer protection to one of this maiden's sect. It is not that I value my own safety, but there are those of whom I am sole protector, and their security

is most dear to me. We are not of the favored fold which gathers beneath the shelter of the laws of these colonies, and although I doubt not *your* good faith, I must be certain also of his of whom you speak. I must know that the power you would influence will not in turn be directed against the defenseless ones of my own hearthstone, who have kindly offered aid and shelter to one who demanded their sympathy."

"What thou sayest is just, and I feel that I am powerless. Wherefore should men frame such cruel laws? Edith, then must know the worst, and the gray hairs of her father descend to the grave in sorrow!"

"I trust not; nay, it must not be so. Can you give me no pledge of your friend's secrecy? Is there no chord of pity in his soul? Surely, maiden, if you could risk the safety of your friends in his hands, he can not be so lost to human kindness!"

"I could risk their safety—if there be truth in man, which I somewhat question," she said, with bitterness. "It were unfair to expose you to a hidden danger. He whose agency I would employ is no other than the Reverend Mr. Mildman. You shall now yourself decide whether he shall know aught of the matter."

"I have heard that his voice has been raised of late in behalf of this misguided people, and it would be token him a man of mercy. There are many I could welcome more cordially into our councils, but since it

must be so (and he is called a man of trust), let him come. God's care is greater in degree than even man's treachery."

"It was surely his hand guided us both here to-day, and my heart doth thank him. Tell that dear girl thou hast seen Alice Harding, and that I wait her better condition with impatience that my eyes may be gladdened by beholding her once again."

"Fair maiden, I leave all with you. Woman's tact will aid you where I am powerless. May He speed your errand, and to-morrow I will be here, at this self-same hour, to hear the good or the evil tidings you may bring me."

Alice hastened home, and sent immediately for Mr. Mildman. She unfolded to him, with caution, the joyful discovery she had made, and obtained, not without some argument, his concurrence in the arrangements she had planned. She accomplished it the more readily, because he was gratified that something had occurred to divert her mind from its own sad thoughts. Each step thus taken gave him additional security of his reward, and so he was sometimes led further than, under other circumstances, he could have been induced to go.

It was therefore arranged that on the following evening, John Morrison should see his daughter, and persuade her that she must not expect him again for the present, since it was unsafe for him to be seen

abroad during the day, and Edith knew that the state of his health forbade exposure to the evening air. When she grew better and stronger, she must be informed of his real situation, and the ameliorating circumstances attending it would go far toward reconciling her thereto, especially as he was more safe in his present condition than before his imprisonment, because he was then liable to an arrest at any moment, and to much more rigorous treatment than he was now receiving.

CHAPTER XII.

WHEN Edith began to arouse from her lethargy she looked around her in perplexity. A dim consciousness of her own existence hovered about her, as standing on the confines of another world, life wore to her vision a shadowy and uncertain aspect. For some time she wavered between sleep and waking, and very slowly the objects around her began to assume the form of reality. As memory arose from oblivion, the sound of rushing waters was still in her ears, and she seemed to feel the motion of their waves. Then it was morning, and her father's voice summoned her to arise. At last, with a strong effort, the chain which bound her spirit was burst asunder, and once more she was living in the present, though scarcely less bewildered than before, by the strangeness of every thing around her. The hangings of her bed, the window in the wrong place, the unfamiliar pictures gazing upon her from the walls, and now the kind motherly face that bent over her, the low voice speaking so soothingly, the cool hand placed so gently upon her forehead—whose were

they? And where was she, thus kindly cherished in a stranger's home?

"Ask no questions yet, my love, you are with friends;" and a pleasant drink was offered to her lips, after which drowsiness again stole over her and she sank once more into forgetfulness. This time, however, it was a calm, restoring sleep, from which she awoke refreshed and invigorated.

The motherly lady still sat beside her, holding her hand, and when she saw Edith was awake, she administered some nourishment, which the patient thought had no taste in particular, after which she smiled upon her kindly, and said—

"I will not be too tyrannical, my dear, and if you have any reasonable request to make you may do so now."

Edith's voice was very weak as she attempted to thank her for her kindness, and inquired if she could see her father.

"Tell me, my child—but remember first that it is important you should avoid all exciting thoughts—where is your father to be found?"

The truth now flashed upon her mind, and she knew that she must have been away from him for some time, and that doubtless he had suffered great anxiety on her account. With some agitation she asked how long she had lain there, and the kind lady reading her thoughts, and not considering it wise to let her know the exact state of the case, replied,

"You have been here a few days, and shall see your father ; only tell me his name and the place of his residence."

This she did, and as we have seen, Louis had gone immediately in quest of him. Meanwhile, as the lady advised, Edith strove to calm her mind by turning her thoughts to Him who had so mercifully restored her to life, and succeeded in regaining her composure.

It would be difficult to tell whether she or her attentive nurse was more desirous of asking questions of the other, though both refrained from doing so for the present.

As there is no particular reason why we should follow their example, we will gratify our curiosity by looking somewhat into the history of these newly-found friends of our heroine.

Sir Roger Hermon, the late husband of this estimable lady, lost his life some years before in the service of his beloved monarch, the unfortunate King Charles. He was the younger son of an old and noble family, and won distinction in the civil wars in which the nation was then plunged, but paid for his dearly-bought honors with both life and possessions.

His widow, finding neither peace nor safety in her native land, and fearing to lose her only son in the storm which threatened to sweep away all trace of

loyalty from the realm, bade farewell to England, and landed, with her little family and the remnant of their fortunes, on the New England shore.

They had now lived in Boston for several years in the most strict seclusion, avoiding with scrupulous care any action by which their position should be made conspicuous. In accordance with the statute, they were in the habit of attending the services of the Congregational—then the established church of the Colonies—for Mrs. Hermon had already felt too keenly the consequences of openly defying the popular power, to dare again its relentless vengeance. Yet she carefully instilled into her children's minds the doctrines of her mother Church of England, and taught them to cherish as their dearest privilege the hope of one day avowing their religious sentiments.

Being a woman of superior education and high intellectual attainments, she was able to bestow upon them a degree of culture they could not otherwise have attained, and strove to instill into their minds every noble sentiment, and to guide the enthusiasm of character, which was theirs both by nature and inheritance, into the purest channels.

Louis now repaid her devotion with the warmest love and admiration which a son can lavish on a parent. He longed to adopt the profession to which his father's life had fallen a sacrifice, but being the only protector upon whom his mother and gentle sister could lean, he

abandoned the idea, and devoted himself to the very opposite one of medicine.

Angeline was still a child—a fond and loving one—one of those beings who lean upon others' strength—dependent on the affection.

But there was another member of Mrs. Hermon's household, toward whom her eye never turned without unconsciously expressing perplexity. Henriette was all that remained to her of a beloved brother. She was an orphan, and had been under Mrs. Hermon's care from early childhood. To a striking deformity of body, she united a still greater one of mind, and from her aunt's first acquaintance with her, her character seemed formed. Though singularly susceptible to intellectual cultivation, Mrs. Hermon's labors, morally, fell upon an unyielding soil. Henriette was keen-witted and intriguing, and her propensity to sarcasm indicated a painful degree of bitter feeling toward her kind. But the trait which gave her aunt the greatest anxiety was her want of truth.

The only person to whom this singular girl had ever been known to yield a point was Louis, nor would she to him when she suspected he was acting upon his mother's instigation.

Such were the members of Mrs. Hermon's family, and it was here that Edith found a preserver and friendly hands to minister to her necessities.

Since that evening when Louis brought in his lifeless

burden and consigned her to his mother's care, Mrs. Hermon's attentions had been unremitting, her kindness unbounded. As Edith lay there in her dripping robes, a tender pity sprang up in the matron's heart and hovered like a ministering angel around the motherless and outcast girl. For they saw by the fashion of her garments that she belonged to the sect called "heretic," whom they were forbidden to assist, even in the most dire necessities of hunger, sickness, or other calamity, and against whom the doors of human love and divine pity were by a stern law commanded to be kept firmly closed. But no such law had power to bind the heart of this heroic woman. There was an appeal in that pale countenance which she did not for a moment think of resisting, and when the first signs of returning life were visible, tears, such as saints may shed, fell upon the face of the unconscious Quaker's child.

Edith was soon wrapped in dry, warm clothing, and placed in a comfortable bed. And now for the first time Louis was questioned as to the circumstances attending this unlooked-for event.

"Some mother's heart is well-nigh broken this night, I fear," said Mrs. Hermon.

"Or some lover's," sneered Henriette.

"Mamma," whispered the trembling little Angelina, "do you think she meant to do it?"

"We can not tell, my love, but I trust not."

The same idea had occurred to both Louis and his mother, and they exchanged glances of intelligence, as he remarked, "It may be that she was driven to desperation by those stringent laws lately enacted against that sect."

Henriette laughed scornfully, as she replied, "Or that her pretty face has been her ruin."

Mrs. Hermon's face was expressive of the deepest pain at these words, for she could not but admit the possibility of their truth, and she thought, in such a case, it were better she had perished. But the next moment she reproached herself for the thought, and rejoiced that if it were true, the poor girl had still time left her for repentance.

"My children, let us admit no harsh or hasty judgment, for we know not what anguish that young heart may have suffered, or that her purity of mind is not far greater than our own. With us she shall have every kindness, and may the pleasure be ours of restoring her to those who love and mourn her."

Late that night Louis and herself sat in consultation upon their most wise and prudent action under these difficult circumstances. They had discovered nothing about her person which gave them any clew to her name. A small gold locket, fastened about her neck by a chain, they opened, and found that it contained a lock of brown hair, much the color of her own. It would not do to notify the authorities of the occurrence,

for besides bringing themselves into notice, and not only putting it beyond their power to bestow any further kindness upon her, it would probably subject them to a severe penalty for what they had already done, and expose the unfortunate girl and her friends to extreme severity. It was therefore decided that on the morrow Louis should quietly endeavor to ascertain whether the thing were noised abroad, or if inquiries were known to have been made, or search for the missing one.

Being a stranger to most of the citizens, he could not address himself to them for information, nor could he wisely venture any inquiries without the risk of exciting suspicion or of being questioned in return. He heard therefore only incoherent rumors of an elopement, in which the Evil One himself figured conspicuously, and of a crazy Quaker having been committed to the jail on the previous evening, and although he strongly suspected that the latter was a friend or relation of the unfortunate girl, he had no means of ascertaining whether it were really so or not, or of definitely knowing any thing of the circumstances. The only thing then left for them to do, was to keep the whole matter as quiet as possible, at least until Edith should recover sufficiently to tell her own story.

The poor girl had suffered so much mental anxiety, that it could not be without its influence upon her frame, and such causes as these combined with the

effects of her accident, contributed to produce the fever from which she was now prostrate. Her illness was long and severe, and the attention of each member of the family was demanded, by turns, beside her sick bed. Even Angeline was frequently called upon, and proudly did she fulfill the duties of her important post. In watching that pale suffering face, and performing such offices as lay within her ability she soon learned to love the unconscious maiden, thus thrown upon the kindly shore of her own hospitable home.

Henriette sometimes watched beside her too, but in so doing her heart was not moved to tender or subduing emotions. To see that she was beautiful was to insure her hatred, and beside, there was something in the solemn loveliness of that pure colorless face that reproached this singular girl for her cruel suspicions. Henriette felt it too, and hated her all the more because she knew she had injured her.

One day when her aunt was wearied out with watching she was summoned to take her place in the sick-chamber.

As she stood at the bedside, the locket which hung around Edith's neck attracted her attention. She had seen it opened on the night when first Louis brought the fair girl there, and knew they said it contained only hair. Something now struck Henriette as she looked at it, and leaning over the bed she took it in her hand and pressed the spring; it flew open and disclosed the

hair. But on viewing it more closely she thought she saw another spring within the first opening. She placed her finger upon it, and the face of a very beautiful female was before her.

Had Mrs. Hermon but seen what Henriette now looked upon, how would the sight have thrilled her with surprise and tenderness! How would she have cherished that motherless girl on her own maternal bosom, nor ever thought to drive her thence through coldness or distrust! How much misery had been spared herself, her son, and that unconscious sufferer.

So slight is sometimes the barrier between us and what we would most desire. Thus we struggle with the phantoms of to-day, when but a veil of gossamer hides the truths of to-morrow from our view. We turn from the straight path that lies before us—the path of right—to grope for some hidden way that leads to happiness.

Henriette closed the locket hastily, for she heard Louis' step approaching the chamber. The young physician stood beside the bed and placed his finger upon the wrist of the patient. Henriette watched his countenance as he bent over the sick girl, and read the look of anxiety which softened into tenderness as he gazed.

"He never looked so upon *me*," she thought. "No, I am an object which offends his eye. He loathes me, and he the only being I could love! Yes, I could

grow beautiful in mind if not in form beneath the life-giving warmth of his affection. I could be gentle as a dove with him, but it shall be love or hate between us, and I can give him either! And this girl—he has saved her life, and now comes her gratitude. Well, we shall see! Let him but dare think of her and he shall feel, ay, and she too, what love turned to hatred can work. I will not be alone in my misery.”

She resolved to watch for the first signs of more than a common interest in one she now viewed as a rival, and was almost continually in the sick room, seemingly anxious to engross the office of attendant there. So well did she succeed in hiding her malevolence that Mrs. Hermon was highly gratified, and told her son that she really thought his cousin's heart was reached at last.

But although Louis could not see what purpose Henriette had to answer in thus departing so widely from her previous course, he was suspicious of her motives, and became himself more watchful of his charge, until the morning came when Edith awoke from her long lethargy.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Oh, mamma, is she not lovely, and did you ever see a sweeter smile?"

"She is very patient and gentle, my dear. There is something about her peculiarly attractive. I supposed that that unfortunate people sometimes controlled their feelings to such an extent as to deaden them, but Edith seems to have reached the happiest point, for while she is no way deficient in warmth, she holds herself in such command as one of well-trained mind only can. She has told me this evening how it all happened."

"Oh, did she? I know by your looks she did n't mean to do it!"

Here Mrs. Hermon recounted her story as we have already known it.

"There, cousin Henriette! I knew she could not be the wicked person you thought her."

Her aunt's praise of Edith had already been more than Henriette could well bear, and now looking up and, as she fancied, reading in Louis' eye a triumphant justification of his *protégée*, she arose in haste and left the room.

"Angie! you should be careful not to offend your cousin."

"I didn't mean to, mamma. I was so glad to find that Edith was not to blame, I thought Henriette would be glad, too!" and the gentle child stole quietly up stairs after her cousin, and tapped on her chamber-door.

"May I not come in?"

"No."

"I only wanted to tell you that I didn't intend to offend you."

No answer.

"Can't I kiss you good-night?"

"You may go kiss your new friend in the other room."

Angeline was accustomed to her cousin's rebuffs, but the suspicion contained in this wounded her pride.

"If Henriette thinks I like new friends better than old ones, she's very much mistaken."

So she wiped away a tear or two, and resolved to avoid Edith's room just now, although she had intended to go there, because if she did go it would lend some color to the unjust implication. She thought, however, as she was passing the door she would just listen if all were quiet; and finding it so, she would only peep in and see if Edith were asleep. She therefore stole inside on tip-toe—it was not her fault that the floor creaked, which made Edith turn her head,

and when she was beckoned to, how could she avoid going all the way into the room and up to the bedside? The invalid passed her hand caressingly over the flaxen curls, and smiled. This was irresistible.

"Mamma said I must not talk to you; but would you like me to sit here awhile if I don't say any thing?"

"Indeed, I would, dear little one. Thou may'st say what pleases thee, too, and I will tell thee when I am weary."

Angeline seated herself beside the bed, and took one of those transparent hands in her own lovingly. Neither spoke again for some time, but each felt love kindling in her heart toward the other, and the little girl thought how happy she should be if Henriette were like this kind and gentle stranger.

"Edith is mamma's name. May I call you so?"

"Yes, my child, and I am glad it is so, for perhaps it will teach thee to love me."

"I do love you already; but that *will* teach me to love you more. And," she added after a pause, "I wish there was some reason why *you* should love *me*!"

"My dear little girl, I do, indeed, love thee! There are but few on earth to claim my affection, and all the more readily doth it warm to thee and thine!"

"Have you, then, no dear mother nor sister?"

"Alas, no! But not long ago I had a mother as tender and loving as thine own."

Angeline did not answer, but put both her arms around Edith's neck, and laid her cheek to her's. Both were wet with tears.

"Oh," she exclaimed, "I quite forgot what mamma told me. I have done very wrong!"

"It was all my fault, sweet one. It has done me good. A few more such visits, and I shall need medicine no longer. But, Angeline, thou must not love me without thy mother's sanction!"

"Why may I not, dear Edith?"

"Because of my father's religion. Thy mother may object to our friendship."

Angeline was quite cast down by this. She thought if what her cousin had told her about the Quakers were true, her mother would, indeed, object to an intimacy with her new friend. She feared to ask the privilege, lest it should be prohibited, and as she could not tell Edith this, she did not know what reply to make her.

"But mamma loves you herself, and it can not be wrong for me to do what she does. Beside the Bible says we must love our enemies."

"And dost thou think the Quakers are thy enemies, Angeline?"

"Oh, no, I didn't mean that, but—but—" the poor child became painfully embarrassed.

"But that we must love every one. Is not that it?"

"Yes. Thank you! Mamma could not object to my loving you now, could she?"

"No, not to thy loving me in a general sense. That is, just as thou art commanded to love all the world. But why not ask her permission, Angeline?"

"Why, Edith, she praised you this evening, and I'm sure she does not think I could learn any harm of you, or else she would not let me stay with you here."

"Ah, but she told thee not to talk to me."

"But that was because you are weak, and it might hurt you."

"Angeline, should I not be doing very wrong to encourage thee to do what thy mother might condemn?"

"Yes."

"Well, my dear child, it is not for want of love to thee that I say it, but because I must not betray thy mother's confidence; but it is, perhaps, bringing thee into danger for me to encourage thy affection, and I can not do so without her knowledge and consent. Indeed, my sweet one, I had not spoken as I did to thee at first, but that thy bright loving looks were so warming and winning to my heart that I quite lost sight of all this sad and weary reality. Good-night, now, and may thy young bosom never know as much as mine doth of grief and anxiety."

* * * * *

Edith was in momentary expectation of her father's

visit. Mrs. Hermon sat beside her, endeavoring to calm her agitated feelings, and when his step sounded below she pressed her lips to Edith's forehead, and arose to leave the room.

"Oh! do not go; let my father see one to whom we both owe so much!"

In another moment they were clasped in each other's arms. Both wept, though for some time neither spoke.

"'For this my child was dead and is alive again, she was lost and is found!' It was hard for me and for thee, too, my daughter; but His name be praised, thou art restored to me."

"My father, and how has it fared with thee? Who has cared for thy comfort in my absence, or consoled thee in thy hour of trial?"

"Friends arose to me, as to thee, in my sorrow, and for my consolation I have looked to Him who alone is able to succor;" and turning to Mrs. Hermon, he added. "And thou, friend, yea, sister, let me call thee, what shall I say to thee? To thee and to thine do I owe this joy I never thought again to experience. My heart doth bless thee! May God reward you, for He only can."

After some conversation with his daughter, John Morrison took leave of her, first warning her that she must not expect to see him again for some days, and giving the reasons previously agreed upon between

himself and Mr. Mildman. He also bade her take no thought of him, as he was favored with kindness and attention even greater than he could expect of her.

She did not perceive that he had grown much more feeble, for the room was dimly lighted in order to conceal this fact from her notice. He therefore left her quite cheerful, under the impression that his comfort was well provided for. This was indeed the case; though, had she known he was a prisoner, her apprehensions would have been excited, and the anxiety she must have suffered might have proved fatal in her already enfeebled condition.

Mrs. Hermon found an opportunity of assuring John Morrison, before he left her house, that her utmost care should be bestowed upon his daughter, and that so long as she required her protection it should be freely extended. Thus both father and child separated with comfort and satisfaction in their hearts, and each blessed the kind Providence who had raised up friends to them in their hour of trial.

CHAPTER XIV.

"Come hither, Alice; I have somewhat to say to thee."

She placed herself upon her father's knee, and threw an arm over his shoulder.

"My child, art thou happy in thy father's home?"

"Papa!"—the tears came, and she hid her face in his bosom.

"Nay, my pet, I did not ask the question doubtfully. But, Alice, thou knowest I may not keep thee always."

"Oh! my father, thou mayest keep me. Indeed I will never, never leave thee!"

"There, there, don't cry; why, thou art making a woman of thy old father."

"Let me be always thy own little Alice?"

"And so thou shalt; for indeed they shall never separate us."

Alice was a little reassured by this, although she still trembled, and hid her face, fearing the worst was to come.

"Come, come, look up, for I have pleasant news for

thee. Didst think thy old father was blind all this time—eh, Alice?”

Her very heart stood still with terror.

“Nay, now, never fear my censure. I know all about it, and thou hast my consent to be as much in love as thou shalt please. I was once, and have not forgotten!”

“Do not ask me to love any other than thee.”

“Well, well, I see thou art a true woman—they’ll sooner die than confess it. But thou needst not blush to acknowledge it now, for he has spoken to me, and hath my free consent and approbation to urge his own suit with thee; and since I must give thee up, there is none upon whom I could so willingly bestow thee. What! weeping still? It is just as thy mother did when I first called her mine own. But dry thy tears soon, my love, for thy betrothed will be here ere long, and this were but a sad reception.”

“Father, bid him excuse my absence for this day. To-morrow—”

“What saidst thou? not see him? Daughter, this is not the occasion thou shouldst choose to be whimsical; a womanly dignity is more fitting. Thou didst not mean it, surely! Our reverend friend tells me that thou hast given him some countenance, though no more than a modest maiden and dutiful daughter may. He has, therefore, a right to expect a kind reception. Go, then, and come down soon with thy brightest

looks, for Mr. Mildman is indeed worthy to possess thy affection."

Alice obeyed her father in every thing except the "looks;" and when, by-and-by, she did come down, she was indeed calm, but the lily would almost have been ashamed beside her pale cheek. She seated herself by the window of her parlor, which looked out upon a bed of flowers. In the glad spring-time, when her heart was gay, she had sown the seeds from which these gaudy blossoms sprang. All faded were they now in the autumnal days, as the withering blight of disappointment had fallen upon her. Oh! that she had died while these bright hopes were young, nor lived to feel her weary soul beating its torn wings against the bars of its prison!

She had been there only a little while when one stood beside her. She knew he was there, but did not turn her head nor move. He took her icy hand in his and pressed it against his throbbing heart. His warm lips pressed her cheeks, but the touch sent no electric thrill through her frame. Her pulse beat with calm mechanical regularity, and she did not withdraw from his embrace. A statue could not have seemed more insensible to his presence. It would not have surprised him to find her in tears, or to hear her protest that she loved him not. But he was quite unprepared for this, and felt with deep pain that the chasm between them was

wider than he had imagined. He was alarmed, beside, to see her in this unnatural condition.

"Art thou ill, Alice? Shall I summon thy father or thine handmaid?"

She shook her head negatively.

"This conduct wounds me, Alice. Is it kind?"

What could she say? She did not answer him.

"I will relieve thee of my presence. Perhaps to-morrow thou wilt have one kind word for him whose whole soul is bound up in thee. Have I merited this at thy hands?"

"I know—I know. It is my own fault."

"Do not reproach thyself, dear girl. I have done what I could for thy pleasure—though I speak not of it boastingly—but to show thee how thy wish finds its second in my action. Alice, it shall be thus through life! Fear not, then, to intrust thy happiness to one who will guard it as the miser guards his gold—as the mother shields her babe from unknown dangers—ay, as the Christian cherishes his soul, that dear pledge of immortality! I ask in return that thou wilt not close thy heart against me. Have I thy promise, Alice?"

"Thou hast it."

"Then all is well. My truth thou shalt have no cause to question, and thine shall be to me a rock of trust. Dear girl, we are bound by no idle pledge—no common tie. Our betrothal is witnessed by angels,

and our vow recorded among the things ordained to live forever."

Whether Mr. Mildman loved Alice or not in those days when he first marked her as his own, we will not say. But she had now become very dear to him, and the protestations he made her were sincere. He resolved to win her affections in return, that if indulgence and unfailing patience and devotion could effect it, she should respond to his love.

We commend his course to unfortunate youths who mourn over unreciprocated affection. He did not weary Alice with his presence, although he was careful she should know how much his self-denial cost him. He did not persecute her with protestations, nor urged her to name "the happy day." She was grateful for the delicacy of his behavior, and did not find it as irksome as she had fancied to be Mr. Mildman's betrothed, and to know that there was one whose chief delight lay in anticipating her very wish, and to whom her very faults seemed to endear her more.

But although she had before resolved upon this sacrifice of self to what she looked upon as duty, heroic as the idea was, she found it very difficult in practice, and but for the fact that she was allowed to wear her chain so lightly, it would soon have become insufferable to her impatient spirit. She tried to keep her promise, she strove to banish Edward's image from her mind, but the lingering hope of one day meeting him again

and becoming reconciled, would cling to her, and, like a bird she had taught to love her, this thought still claimed a home in her bosom, and though she drove it thence again and again, it returned as often on its errand of love, and folded its bright wing on its accustomed resting-place.

CHAPTER XV.

EDITH was fast convalescing. She sat now, supported in a chair, still pale and weak, but with the color of returning health stealing once more into her cheek. Alice was on a low stool at her feet. It was her first visit to the invalid.

Edith gazed long and earnestly upon the fair pensive countenance, for as Alice raised her eyes to her's, she missed their sudden flashes of joyful brightness. The once gay girl was surely changed, and her friend called to mind her rash declaration, made on that quiet Sabbath evening, of the use she intended to make of her influence over the minister. "Can it be," she thought, "that the kindness of which my father spoke was purchased at the expense of this dear girl's happiness?"

"Tell me, Alice, for I was not permitted to question my father on the subject, who are those friends of whom he speaks with so much warmth, whose kindness cheered his lonely hours of sorrow? I know thou wert one, dear girl—and the others?"

"I know of but one, Edith; and that one was Mr. Mildman."

"And it was through thee!"

"There was only a word from me. Thank him, if thou wilt thank any."

"And his guerdon—what was it?"

"Thinkest thou he is so base he can not do a kind deed but for guerdon?"

"Think not I ask thy confidence, Alice. But I will thank no one until I know the meaning of all this strangeness, at least not until I am assured that thy happiness has suffered no shock, no change, therefrom."

"My dream was over, Edith, ere that time came."

"What meanest thou, Alice, that thy dream is over?"

"Edith, when I saw thee last, I was a foolish trusting girl, who dreamed that such a thing as happiness was in store for me. I awoke from that vain conceit, and am now a woman, armed with will to subdue my softer nature, with scorn of the love-sick fancies of yesterday. Years have passed over me since last I saw thee! Therefore do not expect to find me the same, for youth is dead, with its gay and airy visions, and another spirit dwells within my frame!"

"Would I could think thee but jesting, Alice. Yet I feel thou art the victim of some strange delusion. What, throw happiness from thee, and call it a sickly dream! I tell thee life is not such as thou dost picture it. He who made us hath given us capacity for enjoy-

ment, and it is only the diseased mind, which views life as a dull and wearisome thing !”

“ Ah, thou hast never loved ! And never mayest thou, for it is but another name for misery ! What if thou shouldst bind thy whole being up in one who vowed eternal truth to thee—if thou shouldst take from thy heart its very life and place it in his bosom, living only through him and almost forgetting the worship due thy heavenly parent in an earth-born adoration ? And then what if thou shouldst see him cast thy gift from him and trample it in the dust, crushing out the very light and life of thy existence ? Where were thy belief in this world’s good ? Wouldst thou not turn, weary, from the dull, plodding path before thee, and wish to hide thy sorrow in the grave ?”

“ Oh, Alice, it is not, it can not be thus with thee.”

“ It is. Yet do not weep for me. My tears are all shed, and my heart has grown too hard for grief. Indeed I scarcely feel aught ; sorrow hath little power over me, and joy none. Edith, this world seems no longer a reality, and every thing wears a dream-like and unreal aspect. Even though I hold thee here I scarce know whether it is thou or some phantom wearing thy form.”

“ I grieve for thee deeply, but not hopelessly. This strange humor shall have an end. But—think not I would touch thy wound with other than a healing hand—where is he whom thou callest false to himself and thee ?”

"I know not. It is my daily task to banish him from my remembrance, and if this heart and life part in the struggle, it must be. Do not seek to awaken those dead hopes from their ashes! Thou must help me to attain my victory."

"Oh, place thy hope in Him who upholds the weak and strengthens the fainting soul. If thy love has indeed been spent on an unworthy object, with His help thou shalt take up thy burden, and be sustained beneath its weight."

"Edith, He is far away. Since that day my faith and my love are cold, and God's face is turned from my prayer."

"Alice, either thou art wrong, or else all those dear promises are vain! Thinkest thou to attain this conquest of thyself, or dost thou confess thy weakness and call upon Him in child-like earnestness for aid?"

"I feel not the will to be humble. Thou canst not know the bitterness of my wound. Edith it is more difficult to confess my error to Him whose kindness and forgiveness I am assured of, than to man, in whose bosom there is no chord of pity. I did acknowledge my folly and ask to be received into his heart once more; would perfect love have denied such a petition? Was my fault so great that no excuse could serve? Oh, should he come before me now and say not even 'forgive,' but 'receive me,' would not my whole soul spring into life once more? Alas what do I say?"

How wildly I am raving! I, the betrothed of another!"

"Alice!"

"It is true."

"Thou art not deceiving *him*?"

"Edith, he knows I love him not, yet he is content to trust me. I am, indeed, unworthy his high affection. He loves me, and I am not ungrateful. Yes, in some future time I shall even love him, not with the wayward passion of early youth, but calmly and placidly as these fading autumn days glide away. This storm can not last always, rest will come, and although the beauty of summer and the fruits of autumn be swept away by the tempest, there is quiet in the wintry landscape, there is repose in its icy bondage!"

"Oh, Alice, I can not bear to hear thee talk so! It must not be, and yet what can I do to save thee? Why wilt thou not see thine error, but art bent thus upon thine own destruction?"

"Do not mourn so uselessly. It is destiny, and I must yield to its unchanging laws."

"There is no such thing as that thou speakest of! Did we but walk in the straight path before us—the path of truth—following the better instincts of our nature, and leaving the rest in the hands of God, we should have naught to fear. But some shadow in the way affrights our timid souls, and we step aside, thinking by our own wisdom to secure the end desired, and

so we lose ourselves in a deceitful maze, and sit down despairingly and cry out against 'Fate' and 'Destiny!'"

"Well, well, blame me as thou wilt, my punishment exceeds my faults. Remember this, and let it soften thy condemnation."

"Oh, Alice, it is not yet too late to avoid the greatest fault of all!"

"My happiness and my life are now of too little moment to strive for further. All I ask or expect is to make atonement for the past by submission to the future. Edith, I marvel thou wouldst turn me backward, for I thought thy friendly encouragement would cheer me on!"

"And so it should, could my conscience approve thy course."

"Edith, if the gallows stood in thy conscience's way thou wouldst walk to it with that same unflinching eye. So would not I, for out of pure fright I should turn and fly."

"There are some things harder to me than death would be, though my late lesson has taught me life's value. But Alice, thou talkest of this victory. Promise me at least this, that until self-conquest is achieved thou wilt not become the wife of any."

"And thus throw down my only prop? Dost thou think I would strive for it unless bound as I now am? No, for then I should only nurse my grief and carry

it through life in my bosom. I should sink at once into the easy lap of sorrow (for it is so in comparison with this continual strife), and revel in its luxury!"

"My friend, cast not from thee His aid and His comfort! Put away pride and self-sufficiency, and humbly seek His footstool. I pray that this cloud may pass from thy spirit, and the light of faith soon penetrate its mystery."

"Sweet friend, I have done wrong to throw its shadow over thee, but I have longed for thy sympathy, and the darkness is less already for its cheering ray. But enough of this. I have seen thy friend, Edith, and time was when the dark orbs of thy gallant knight might have endangered my heart's citadel. Beware, fair maiden, put on armor of proof, for except that I should grieve to see thee a victim, it would delight me to behold Cupid playing his pranks with my sober little Quakeress!"

As Alice said these words she bestowed upon Edith a parting caress and turned to leave the chamber, when, to her great surprise, she suddenly came upon a little bent figure, whose eyes glared upon her with an expression between contempt and anger, but before either of the girls had time to recover from her astonishment at this unexpected intrusion, Henriette abruptly left them.

"Who is that strange creature, Edith? I trust she did not hear my silly jesting, but what a look she gave

me ! Am I not almost annihilated ? have I not shrunk to half my natural proportions ? Heaven preserve thee from her wrath, and me from another such encounter !”

6*

CHAPTER XVI.

"I WONDER what can be the matter with Angeline. Within these few days she seems to have lost her natural gayety. Have you not observed the change in her, my son?"

"I have, and doubt not that Henriette is at the root of it. Come hither, my little sister, and tell me why that face of thine wears such stately gravity!"

"I suppose, brother, you think I am not wise enough to be grave sometimes."

"Why, here is a precocious sage, truly. What, my oracle, my bird of wisdom, my Pallas! Think of it, mother, Angeline has become suddenly wise. She has sprung into it, like Jack's bean, all in a night!"

"Come, come, Louis, you shall not tease the child so! Go to your own dusty volumes, Esculapius, and leave Angeline and myself to confer together!"

"But I am all curiosity. Will you promise to enlighten me as to these strange developments?"

"We will make you no promises. Go, you are banished from our councils."

"I submit to the powers that be; but whist, mother,

perhaps my sister considers herself sufficiently matured to be in love. And if so, I insist upon my right to raise objections."

"For shame, Louis, even to hint at such things!"

"Well, I thought young ladies never had secrets of any other nature. At least that they never kept any."

"And I thought, mamma, that none but women ever had any curiosity!"

"That shaft has pierced me. I am gone!"

"Tell me, my love, is there any thing that troubles you? I think you are not as happy as usual. My little daughter has nothing to conceal from mamma, I hope?"

Angeline leaned her head against her mother's bosom as she answered, "I have done something very wrong; will you forgive me, dear mamma?"

"I hope, my dear, it is something which your sensibility exaggerates, and that it does not really call for tears."

"Oh, yes it does, for I have deceived my mother!"

"Tell me in what way, love, and do not fear to speak thy whole mind."

"I wanted to make friends with a stranger, and did not wish to ask your permission because—because I was afraid you would not approve."

"I trust you have formed no improper acquaintance, or if you have, that it will not be difficult to break it off, as it must be recent."

"It was not exactly that, mother, for I loved her

before I thought you might disapprove, and so I told her, and she loved me, too; and I was so happy to have found a friend. And then the wrong came, mamma, for she told me that perhaps you would not consider her a safe friend for me, and bade me ask you; and I tried to persuade her that it was not wrong to love any body, because I was afraid you would forbid it if I did ask you."

"Well, my dear, whoever this friend is, her honorable conduct entitles her to our respect; but what reason is there why I should object to your intimacy?"

"Because she says it might be dangerous to me and to you and all of us, and Henriette told me that if any body knew of it they might put us all in jail to punish us."

"Do you mean all this about Edith, my child?"

"Yes, mamma, I do."

"And is this the reason why you have been so quiet and sad?"

"Yes, mamma. I felt so badly because I wanted to deceive you, and because I had to stay away from Edith, and was afraid she would think I was angry or ill-tempered, or else that she might suspect you had forbidden me to come to her; and that would wound her feelings. But I could not see her without loving her more every time, and so I staid away. And I hope it is not wrong; but I can't help loving her more and more."

"You have done quite right, my dear, to stay away from her and to tell me all this, too. In my zeal for her I have lost sight of prudence, and we must not allow our feelings to carry us away too far. Very soon she will be able to return to her friends, and as we shall not probably see her after that, it would not be worth while for you to form any intimacy. I am sorry, my child, to deny you this pleasure, but you need no longer reproach yourself for what is past. Go, now, to your lessons, Angeline, and let me see you once more happy and cheerful."

* * * * *

"You are looking brighter and stronger to-day, Edith."

"Thanks to the kind care extended me, I am; but, dear lady, I would gladly begone, lest my presence bring danger to those who have saved and sheltered me."

"Edith, we must do our duty and fear not. Let not this thought distress you. My child, you must long to see your father again."

"It has seemed very, very long since he was here, and I would not ask that he should come again. Dost thou not think I could soon go to him? Our home must be a lonely place for him."

"Not quite yet; we must risk nothing. Edith, you are in no condition to resume the duties of a housewife. Have you no friends with whom you could both remain for a time?"

"I know of none. Could I but persuade my father to return to England, we were better and happier there. But that is vain. Once more in our quiet home, my strength will soon be quite restored."

"My child, you know your father has found friends. Since you have been here he has been kindly cared for, his comfort well secured, and such attention paid his feeble health as should be. He is more secure from the dangers you feared for him than before, therefore do not be alarmed to hear that you would not at present find him in your former home."

"Where is he, then? Oh! speak, dear lady! What has happened? He has not gone hence to return no more? Oh! say he has not!"

"Surely not, my dear. Your father is as well in health as when you last saw him. But when he missed you he was maddened by anxiety and apprehension, and incurred the anger of the governor, who ordered him—"

"He is in prison! Oh! merciful Heaven, why did I live to see these dreadful fears realized?"

"Be calm, my child. He has a powerful friend in the kind and excellent young minister. No harm shall come to him; and we trust, ere long, he may be released to you, and suffered to go where he will."

"Oh! I must go to him. I have been living here in peace and ease, unconscious of his condition. Detain me no longer," she said, rising; "I will demand

admittance to his cell, and they shall take us both—these cruel, blood-thirsty men!”

She sank back again exhausted in her chair, and Mrs. Hermon earnestly sought to soothe and calm her agitation.

“Edith, it might be much worse with him than it is. Did I not tell you he has powerful friends? Your father spake with gratitude to God for his mercies.”

“I feel thy rebuke, my more than friend. I will strive to be patient and humble under this blow, and God forgive the wrongful spirit in which I spoke a moment ago!”

She bowed her head and wept, and Mrs. Hermon left her to relieve her overburdened heart with tears and prayer. She related their conversation to her son, and also that between herself and Angeline, commenting upon Edith's upright conduct toward the child, and speaking in warm terms of the integrity and nobleness of her general behavior.

“I do not see what harm it could do to indulge Angeline in this particular,” said Louis.

“I fear only the severe penalties of the law; for Angeline could only gain honorable sentiments from the contact.”

“There is no danger to the child from these laws you speak of. Surely they do not carry them to such an excess in the execution.”

“I should never have believed that I could feel so

much tenderness toward a stranger. There is something about this girl which singularly affects me, and seems strangely associated with some early memory. Would that Henriette were like her!"

"They are as widely separated as the antipodes! And, mother, you should watch my cousin, for, if I mistake not, she feels malevolence toward the maiden, and may take an opportunity to show it."

"She has been talking to Angeline on the subject of the Quakers, and I doubt not thought to frighten her out of her affection for Edith. Poor girl! she is so sad about her father that I am tempted to send the child to comfort her."

"I thought your kind heart would yield, mother," said her son, with unfeigned pleasure. "Shall I call my sister to you?"

Mrs. Hermon struggled for a moment with her fears, then yielding to her better impulse, she bade him summon her.

When the little girl came in, traces of tears were still visible, but she strove to wear a cheerful smile, and obeyed the call with alacrity.

"My dear, upon further reflection, I have changed my opinion, and you may go to Edith and try to comfort her. She is sad and downcast because she has just heard that her father is confined in prison."

Angeline stood still a moment in incredulous surprise, then her face beamed all over with sunny delight.

She looked at Louis, as if suspecting that she owed her pleasure to his intercession, then flew to her mother's bosom. Throwing her arms around her neck, she almost smothered her with kisses. Her brother was then subjected to the same operation, and afterward she would have hastened to Edith's room, but Louis held her fast. He wanted some excuse for another look at her childish loveliness.

"Mother, my sister is certainly distraught! Let me see, pulse high, indicative of excitement, cheeks flushed and feverish. One moment she is gravity and wisdom personified, and the next she throws both to the winds, and indulges in outbursts quiet alarming. I saw she was smothering you, and just as I was about to interfere to save your ruff, pounce she comes upon me! And now, if I do not prevent her, she will endanger the existence of all the other members of the family."

"Dear brother, let me go. I am afraid you will induce mamma to change her mind again."

"Now, mother, do you hear that? She has no respect for either of us. If you will not punish her, I shall take the matter into my own hands and inflict—"

"A pill, I dare say, good doctor."

"Again? daring child! Get thee gone then, ere I transfix thee with—"

"A cataplasm!"

Edith did not hear the light step in her chamber, but she felt an arm passed gently around her neck and

a small hand stealing coaxingly into her own, and looking up, she saw, "as it had been the face of an angel" regarding her with tenderest sympathy. That winning smile seemed to calm the tumult within her, and she thought what a blessed thing is the affection of a child.

"Oh, Edith, mamma sent me, and I did not ask her permission until this morning."

"Bless her ; it was the kindest deed of all."

"And we may be friends now, I am sure, and you shall teach me, oh ! so many things, and we will love each other like sisters. Will we not, dear Edith ?"

"For a little while, sweet one. But do not count too much upon our friendship, for it may be very brief."

"But you will not leave us for a long time yet. You are not strong enough to go, you know."

"I shall be very soon. We often gather strength from duty."

"You will be glad to leave us, and I shall be so sorry."

"Angeline, I shall be glad to go, but only because my presence here involves you in danger. Beside, my father, to whom I owe life, and duty, and affection, requires my care."

"But, Edith, you can not be with him now, because they will not let you."

"Yes ; I can share his prison."

"Oh! you can not mean to go there, to stay in that hateful place."

"Why, my child? it is not the place that is terrible, but the idea of crime with which it is associated. An innocent person can be as happy in a prison as in a palace, and it does not follow that all are wicked who are there."

"Oh, no! I know that, because Saint John was put into prison by Herod; and Saint Peter, too, was there, and an angel came and let him out; beside, mamma has told me of a great many Christians who have been kept in jail because they would not deny their religion, and I have read of unfortunate people being there who had not committed any crime at all."

"And dost thou not think that they were far happier thus than if they had disobeyed God's commands and tried to please the kings of this world?"

"Indeed, I do; and, Edith, I think I would do just as they did."

"And suppose thy own dear mother were in yonder jail now, and thou knewest she was sick and suffering for thy care, what wouldst thou do, Angeline?"

"I would go to the prison door and ask them to let me in."

"Would it not be too terrible and frightful a place for thee to venture into?"

"No, indeed; not if mamma were there! And if they refused me, Edith, I would do something—not

really wicked, you know—but whatever mamma had done, for instance, so as to make them put me there.”

“But suppose some kind friend urged thee to remain with her and share her pleasant home, leaving thy mother to pine away in loneliness?”

“Oh, Edith! you know I would not do that. I hope you don’t think me so ungrateful and hard-hearted.”

“Certainly I do not; and I hope thou dost not think so of me.”

“Edith, you make me think you right, just as you did the other day about our friendship! But still I can not bear you to go there. Shall you not be afraid?”

“Afraid of what, little one?”

“I don’t exactly know; and yet it seems fearful to me, too.”

“God is as powerful to protect His children there as elsewhere; and beside, I have been taught to do what I feel is right without hesitating for fear of the consequences.”

Angeline looked as if she would have spoken, but hesitated a moment, and then relapsed into silence, and seemed absorbed in thought.

“What is it thou wouldst say, my child?”

She blushed, and was embarrassed as she replied—
“It would not be right; that is, it would not be polite, perhaps, to say it.”

“I will excuse all the rudeness, so thou mayst speak thy mind.”

"I was going to ask if—that is, if all the Quakers are like you."

"In what respect, dost thou mean?"

"Why, in doing what is right, and—and about trusting in God."

"I never knew one who did not trust and believe in God our Saviour, and their moral courage is undoubted. Indeed, they have not so much fear of man as I wish they had, or rather, they do not yield, as I think they might consistently, to the prejudices of the time. Do not judge of them by me, however, or thou wilt do many of them sad injustice."

"But do you think it is right for them to disobey the laws and to disturb public worship, as some of them have done?"

"No, my dear; I can not approve of it; but we must remember that persecution often drives people further than reason excuses, and that in all ages the zeal of Christians has led them into extravagances. Alas! that His name should be made the watchword for hate and dissension."

That night, before she slept, Edith unfolded her plans to Mrs. Hermon. The kind lady at first remonstrated, but, like Angeline, was forced to admit that she was in the right, for her father needed—more than Edith was aware of—her care and attention. One thing, however, Mrs. Hermon insisted upon, that she should remain

there a few days longer to regain her strength, and Edith reluctantly yielded to her judgment in this particular. She also proposed to send for Mr. Mildman, and endeavor, through his agency, to obtain permission for the young girl to share her father's prison, but Edith besought her not to do so, adding that reasons, not her own, influenced her in rejecting his assistance, as far as possible, or rather in forbearing to solicit it. In fact, Edith was determined that Alice should not, through her actions, be laid under further obligations to the minister, and she resolved, alone and unattended, to visit the Governor, and make her own appeal to his mercy.

When Mrs. Hermon first heard of Mr. Mildman's interposition in their favor, she began to suspect that it arose from more than a common interest in the fair young Quakeress, and perhaps this was the reason why she so freely expressed to Louis the admiration she felt for Edith's character. Had she known the effect of her praises upon her son's mind, she would perhaps have experienced some reasonable alarm. On his part, Louis more nearly guessed the truth, for his interview with Alice, on the morning of their first meeting, led him to another conclusion. For some reason he did not reveal this to his mother, but allowed her to indulge in her own more satisfactory surmises. She was somewhat surprised when she found Mr. Mildman's counsel and aid set aside on the present occasion, and

could only reconcile it with her former ideas on the ground of Edith's over-anxiety for his safety.

It was no more than natural that Louis should feel interested in the young girl whom he had rescued from death, and whose misfortunes claimed his sympathy, and it was only the fear of involving his mother in the consequences that withheld him from going boldly before the Governor and pleading the cause of Edith and her father. He was brave, enthusiastic, and generous, and, on his own account, fearless of the result. He knew that Edith would be closely questioned with regard to her secret friends, and from his knowledge of her character, felt little doubt that she would keep the secret, however closely pressed. He could ill brook the thought that his cowardice might recoil upon this frail and delicately-nurtured girl; and without mentioning his intention to his mother, he resolved to come forward, in case of necessity, and take upon himself both the blame and the penalty. Through Mr. Mildman he could be informed of the progress of her cause, and would hold himself in readiness to appear in an emergency. But his kind intentions were defeated by Edith's prompt and independent action.

CHAPTER XVII.

"DEAR Edith! I have mamma's permission to bring you down to tea. Come, lean upon my shoulder, and don't fear to bear your weight upon me because I'm little. There! do we not get along nicely? Why, you can walk much better than I thought you could."

But by the time they had descended the stairs, Edith was quite exhausted, and as she tottered into the family-room, overcome by emotion as well as fatigue, Louis sprang to her side, and assisting her to his mother's chair, tenderly placed her therein. Mrs. Hermon hastened to bring her a glass of home-brewed wine, while Angeline brought cushions and a footstool, and Henriette stood apart, regarding them all in silence.

Edith was very lovely as she sat there in her simple white robe, and Angeline gazed upon her protégée—as she was pleased to consider her—in undisguised admiration. Louis, too, who had admired her death-like beauty through her tedious illness, could not but now confess that life was much more lovely and attractive. She had never yet felt that she could speak her thanks for all she owed him, but the grateful eloquence of her

glance as their eyes met, told more perfectly than words could do, her sense of obligation.

The evening meal was over, and the family assembled for prayer. When Mrs. Hermon's voice was raised in the words of those familiar petitions which she had not heard spoken since she and her mother last knelt together to offer up the worship of their souls to God, Edith's heart was moved to deep and stirring emotions. It was the first intimation she had had that their faith and her own were the same, and how she longed to pour out her heart's fervency to those stirring responses. And when Mrs. Hermon proceeded in a still more solemn voice to offer thanks to Heaven for her own restoration to life and health, Edith's low "amen" was uttered amid sobs and tears. Indeed, so overcome was she, that she could not regain her composure, and when their devotions were ended, she arose to retire. Mrs. Hermon's supporting arm was placed around her, and as she laid her upon her bed and tenderly kissed her forehead, Edith felt the warm tears of sympathy fall upon her brow, and pressed that friendly hand to her lips and to her fast beating heart as she whispered,

"Oh! do not wonder it has moved me so; I have heard it often around our own hearth in happier days."

"Alas!" thought Mrs. Hermon, "that it was ever set aside." But as Edith said no more, she did not question her on the subject, nor did she suspect that so dear a tie bound the young girl's heart to her own.

Henriette was skilled in music beyond what was usual in those days, and it was her custom after family prayer to awaken her harp's melodious strains, and the mother and children united their voices with its harmony.

But on this evening each member of the family seemed absorbed in his or her own meditation, and Henriette and her harp were quite forgotten. Finding this to be the case, after vainly trying to attract their attention by touches of their favorite airs, she retired to her chamber, and, fastening the door, gave vent to the evil passions that raged within her bosom.

"Yes," she exclaimed, as she paced her narrow room, "it is but the fulfillment of my prediction! Those tears—and no man but is fool enough to be subdued by them—will do her work. What if I should weep, would it melt my good cousin's heart?"

As she said these words she caught sight of her bent figure in a little mirror which hung against the wall. She rushed at it, and with one angry blow dashed the truth-telling monitor to atoms, and stamped her foot upon its fragments.

"Why did they not strangle me when I was born a crushed and unsightly object. No human heart has ever loved me—no, not one! And there is only one being on earth I ever could love, and he—no, he dare not, he shall not think of this Quaker girl. But why

do I fear it? There is too wide a barrier between them, and I will make it still wider!"

As this thought strengthened, she grew more calm, and even laughed when she thought of the insuperable obstacles she could place in the way of their love.

"He may slight me if he will, I can bear that if he love not her; but far better could I endure to see him die than to behold his life devoted to another."

Edith's anxiety to be with her father increased daily, but she felt that her strength would not yet support her through the task she had assigned herself. Although he did not come again to visit her, he wrote her, frequently and affectionately, words of cheer and encouragement, which she in like manner returned. Mr. Mildman was the means through which their notes were transmitted, and the correspondence proved a source of great mutual comfort and satisfaction. Since being assured of his daughter's safety, John Morrison's health had apparently much improved; but this was chiefly from the fact that his mind was relieved from a weight of sorrow, and not because his bodily condition had undergone any material or permanent change for the better.

"Henriette, my dear, give us a little of your sweet music now."

"Excuse me, aunt; I am not in the humor," she

answered, for she was resolved to avenge the insult of the previous evening. The request was not repeated, for every one knew it was useless to importune her.

Angeline stole from her seat by Edith's side and whispered a word in her mother's ear.

"Did she tell you so? But perhaps she has objections to doing it, my dear."

"She says she does not think it wrong."

"Edith, this little tell-tale has betrayed you. Will you take Henriette's place? that is, if you have no scruples on the subject."

"My hand has been long unpracticed, however, if you will forgive this, I shall be glad to contribute to your pleasure, if it lies in my power to do so."

Henriette's performances were quite put to shame by those of the new musician, who, to the surprise of every one, exhibited an extraordinary degree of taste and cultivation in the science. Music was her delight, and her pleasure in it now was greatly enhanced by the fact that it had been long denied her. Louis sat charmed by her side, and their voices mingled in such sweet strains that Mrs. Hermon and Angeline were entranced with enjoyment, and Henriette bitterly regretted her perverseness, and her heart burned with angry envy.

When Edith was alone, Henriette stole softly into her chamber. After some remarks upon indifferent topics, she reverted to the music, and said, "How is

it, Edith? I thought you Quakers disdained such worldly things."

"The Quakers do not disdain music; but they consider that the solemn duties of life, if properly fulfilled, leave no time for the practice or acquirement of light accomplishments."

"But you are not consistent, for it seems to me that *your* life especially calls for the exercise of most solemn duties."

"I trust I have never allowed the one to interfere with the performance of the other. I was taught music in early childhood, and through love of it acquired it readily. I can never learn to think it wrong as some do, although, since our connection with this poor persecuted people, I have ceased to indulge in it."

"For my part, I should make an admirable Quaker in some respects, for I confess to little taste in religious mummeries. I can not see why my aunt should insist upon reading those tiresome prayers twice a day."

"Henriette, it ill becomes me to rebuke thee, but I can not hear thee speak so without expressing my disapprobation."

"Oh! I dare say you will defend what my aunt does, in spite of your Quakerism. Nay, now, you need not look the picture of insulted dignity, for although you may think my mode of speaking rough, it is at least honest. But do you know, Edith, what my aunt's greatest dread is at present?"

"I do not wish to hear aught of thy aunt's concerns, other than she is herself pleased to impart to me."

"But I will tell you, because you are interested in it: her greatest dread is, that the governor, or some of these pious straight faces, will find out that she has given you shelter, and that you still remain under her roof."

"Henriette, I had never willingly exposed these kind friends to this danger, and it is only through this dear lady's solicitation that I am here thus long; and, moreover, I can not and will not believe that she is not all sincerity."

"But what could she do? she could not turn you out into the street; and she knows you have nowhere else to go, except to jail. And now I will tell you what her great dread is next to this, and, indeed, perhaps I ought to have placed it first: It is that you and my Cousin Louis—"

"I will not hear another word from thee; and in order to prevent it either thou or I must leave this apartment!"

"Why, Edith, now I really admire you! I did not think to find this spirit in my meek-eyed Quakeress. Since you have got so far as to order a member of my aunt's family out of the room, I should really like to have you for my friend. Come, Edith, all I have said was only a jest, and intended merely to try your mettle. Say we shall be friends, for I have not seen

any one so like myself in many a day, and I fancy it amazingly!"

"Henriette, I am sorry I allowed myself to become so excited by what thou hast said. I was betrayed into a haste which I can not excuse to myself or to thee."

"Oh, never mind excusing it. I am only glad to see you are not the gentle, inoffensive person you seem. I wondered if there was not a fiery spark beneath that calm exterior!"

"I am, indeed, but human, and moved too easily by hasty passions. Yet methinks my anger was no more than any sensitive mind might be moved to by thy goading. Thou hast deeply wounded me, but I forgive thee, and would now ask to be alone."

"I thank you most humbly for your generous pardon. But I can not help laughing, Edith, to think how astonished my aunt would have been just now to see you. And Louis, too! I am afraid you would have lost all you gained by your sacrifice of principle in singing so sweetly for his entertainment. By the way, Edith, I have no doubt you could induce him to play the true and trusty knight in your service. A little persuasion from you might prevail upon him to brave the council or perhaps to share your prison."

"His generosity shall not be further tested. I go alone and unattended on my errand, except by that Guardian Arm which will support me."

"Well, we shall see how you succeed. You Quakers are fond of trusting in supernatural aid, although it does not seem to arrive very promptly for your purposes. Now, Edith, I suppose you would not be surprised if an angel in visible shape were to come down and plead your cause for you before yon worthy magistrates."

"Henriette, thou shalt not move me again to haste or anger. The aid I rely upon is that which is the hope of all Christians, and it never fails in the hour of need. I know not how I have incurred thy hatred, for I see thou hast come here to insult and torment me. Stay then, if thou wilt, I will place myself above thy rudeness and heed it no longer!"

As Edith said this she took her little Bible in her hand, and sat down by the light to read. Henriette laughed with scorn, and said that she supposed she was now to be exorcised. She made several useless attempts to distract Edith's attention, and seeing she was calm and immovable, she presently prepared to leave the room with this parting salutation:

"Fare you well, Edith, I am sorry that prudence will henceforth prevent me recognizing you as a former acquaintance, but I share in the prejudice of my dear aunt and her family, and since they have not the candor to do so, I will speak for them. We admire you, Edith; we are charmed by the amiability of your conduct and by your perfect self-command; and did

circumstances favor the continuance of our acquaintance, that is, if it did not involve us in a risk which we are unwilling to incur for your sake, we should be glad still to consider you a friend. But I must request that should we hereafter meet, you will look upon us with no signs of recognition, unless indeed, my good cousin should soon succeed in persuading you to change your religion (I doubt not an easy matter), for that of the only true church, and the worship of the powerful deity—Cupid!”

Henriette courtesied low with mock-humility, but Edith did not raise her eyes from her book until she had left her, and she heard the door of her own chamber close behind her. Then she arose and secured the entrance to her room, after which she threw herself upon her knees, and raised her eyes streaming with tears, in agony to heaven. Long she remained thus before she became sufficiently composed to lift her heart in prayer.

After awhile she arose from her kneeling posture with a sweet peace brooding over her spirit, and sat down by the little table and wrote. When she finished her letter (for such it appeared to be), she folded it, placed it upon the table with the address upward, and was soon wrapped in sweet and undisturbed slumber.

On the following morning the family assembled as usual for their devotions, and after waiting some time for Edith to appear, Angeline said,

"May I go and see why she does not come, mamma? Perhaps she is not well this morning."

"Yes, my love; but if she is still sleeping do not disturb her, for the poor child requires rest."

Angeline tapped very softly upon the door, and receiving no answer, she raised the latch and entered the room noiselessly. To her surprise Edith was not there, but on the table she found the letter addressed to her mother. She ran down stairs in haste, her face expressing so much consternation that Mrs. Hermon was not a little alarmed and started from her seat, fearing Edith was again ill. She asked the question hurriedly.

"Oh, no, mamma, but she is gone!" and the little girl burst into tears as she handed the letter to her mother.

Mrs. Hermon opened it and read. Several times in the course of it she was obliged to wipe the tears that arose in her own eyes, and dimmed her sight. When she had concluded she handed it to Louis, and requested him to read it aloud. He complied in a voice that testified to his strong emotion:

"My dearest friend, think me not ungrateful for thus leaving thy kind protection. I go to the performance of a strong and urgent duty, yet one which it is my dearest pleasure to fulfil. But ere I go, I must give utterance to some of the feelings that move me. I say

come, because there are those deep emotions of the soul which disdain the garb of language, and breathe only in a spiritual air. Oh, my more than mother, how can I thank thee for thy ministering care, for thy kindness which has striven to make the obligations thou bestowed seem of little worth, for the delicacy that has guarded my feelings from every shock, for the tender sympathy which moved thy soul! How shall I thank thy noble-hearted son, for the life I owe him, the power to soothe an aged parent's declining days, to watch and ease a father's hours of suffering! How shall I thank that precious child for the balm of her beautiful affection! How bright the garment of angelic purity which her love would throw around me! Alas for the power that is wanting to perform the wishes of my soul! In that better world where we may hope to meet again, where spirit shall commune with spirit in the language of Heaven, then will I breathe to you the soul's warm benison, then will the power be yours to hear and understand. The blessings of this life and of the life to come rest upon your home. Be your hearth consecrated to love and unity and peace. My mother's spirit hovers over you, and breathes its benediction on the hearts in which her child was cherished. I have left thus secretly because I would not involve you in my misfortunes. Do not seek me again. Your lot is one of peace, and I must tread the weary way of sorrow,

therefore I pray that our paths may diverge widely.
Yet my trust is in Him who alone is strong to suc-
cor, and leaning upon the Everlasting Arm I go
upon my pilgrimage with faith and fearlessly.

Fare ye well !”

CHAPTER XVIII.

EDITH had arisen very early in the morning, and placing her cause in the hands of the great Advocate, beseeching Him to soften man's heart to mercy, she went forth to seek the Governor.

When she reached Governor Endicott's dwelling and requested to speak with him, she was informed that he was walking in his garden. She did not allow him to be summoned, but asking that the way might be pointed out to her, sought him there. She saw him advancing up a distant path, holding a little girl by the hand, with whom he appeared to be conversing, and stood respectfully awaiting his approach. As he drew near, she knelt upon the walk which intercepted his way.

"How now? Who have we here? Maiden, who art thou, and what is thy errand, that thou appearest thus humbly in our presence?"

"I am come to ask a great boon, and therefore I appear here, most humbly, as fitteth the importance of my errand."

"What! another of these heretics! Now, as I live, my patience is well-nigh wearied out with them. If

thou comest here to ask pardon for those rebellious persons whom the law condemns to death, through their own blind obstinacy, I tell thee thy petition is vain ; I will hear none of it !”

“That is not my errand. I come to entreat thee to set at liberty one who suffers sickness and bondage in your dismal prison ; or if thou wilt not do this, to permit me, his daughter, to share his captivity.”

“And what is the crime for which he is confined there ? Is he that noisy, uncivil man, who unjustly accused us of robbing him of his child ?”

“He is the same. But I entreat thee to have pity on the aged man who knew not what he did, but was driven by desperate sorrow to that extreme. He was always a quiet and unoffending citizen, and took no part in the unruly disturbances which some were led into.”

“And whence comest thou, girl, and where hast thou concealed thyself ? Some said thou wast dead, and others, whose story appears most worthy of credit, didst say that thou hadst forsaken thy aged parent and gone away secretly with a paramour. Come, my saintly damsel, tell us now, was it love that betrayed thee into this treacherous snare ?”

“It was a sad accident befell me, from which I was rescued by God’s mercy. It was followed by an illness so severe that I am but now able to appear before thee and plead the cause of my father.”

"But tell us now how this marvelous affair did chance ; for I nothing doubt thou canst give us a goodly tale, if the truth were known. What was the accident, and where are the instruments of thy deliverance ?"

Edith here recounted the history of her fearful adventure, but cautiously avoided giving any clew to the means of her escape.

"Well, well ; this may do so far, but it is not enough. We must know the rest, and where thou hast concealed thyself."

"I crave thy pardon, but humbly implore that I may not be questioned of that matter."

"So, so, here we have it again. I marveled at thy humility, but now I see thy Quaker obstinacy looking forth. Thou shalt indeed go to prison, but not to thy father, my cunning maiden, unless without further words thou tell us who are thy secret friends, and where they are to be found."

"I beseech thee to consider that I may not, without extreme baseness, betray the friends who rescued me from a violent death. Thou canst not ask, oh, thou wouldst not, that I should make them to suffer through my treachery !"

"Well, well, come now. What if thou shouldst thereby obtain thy father's liberty, and thine own, and permission to remain unmolested within our jurisdiction ?"

"I should greatly wrong my father and myself by

such a course. An evil requital would it be of his teachings, nor would he accept a liberty so purchased."

"What, not if thou hadst our warrant that thy friends should be lightly dealt with?"

"Not even then. Oh, I *could* not do it. Ask me to serve thee, to do aught at thy command from which my sense of right would not recoil, and I will do it joyfully."

"Dost thou then presume to doubt our guaranty?"

"Not so. But I can not consent to expose them to the rebuke which their kindness might subject them to."

"But consider what thou owest to him who gave thee birth, to the parent who has nurtured thee—illy, to be sure, but still he claims thy gratitude."

"I should do him a grievous wrong in obeying thee. I should do violence to my own feelings also. Thou dost but seek to try me. I have been ill and am yet weak, I pray thee let me go to my father."

"As a reward for thy refusal to satisfy me! A touching appeal, truly! How knowest thou that thy father may not suffer through thy rebellion?"

"Thou couldst not make it an excuse for severity to him. Remember he is sick and aged, and hath no tender hand to minister to his wants or to ease his weary hours of suffering. Have mercy, as thou wouldst one day obtain it, and, in God's name, permit me to go my ways to his prison!"

"It is more likely that we shall order thee to be bound to the cart's tail and whipped through the streets daily, upon thy naked shoulders. Ha! thy cheek pales at last. We have found a way now to obtain thy precious secret!"

"Death were easier far than to endure this exposure; yet a thousand deaths and shameful disgrace would not wring it from my bosom!"

Governor Endicott turned aside for a moment, and muttered, "There is witchcraft among these Quakers, surely, for even their sucking babes possess this indomitable spirit!"

Edith continued, "I beseech your Excellency to consider that they who rescued me from death could not in humanity have done less. They knew me not until that time, nor knew I them, nor indeed for many days after, because my mind wandered long from its mansion, and returned only a short time ago. Sure am I that naught would persuade thee to pursue a course so dishonorable as to betray those who had rescued thee or this sweet child, from a fate so terrible!"

It was not that Edith attempted through flattery to soften the heart of the stern man, but because, in her straightforward simplicity, it seemed a matter almost beyond credit that *any one*, unless deep in degradation, could stoop to such an action. The remark was not without its effect, however, and the Governor's voice and manner became less stern as he replied,

"God forbid that we should strive to persuade thee to an act which were indeed deserving our contempt, did not powerful considerations render it necessary to urge it. In the performance of duty we must sometimes smother the warmer feelings of our nature. Maiden, I do strongly incline to grant thy petition, for thou reasonest well, and seemest to be one gifted with more than ordinary powers of penetration. These friends, for whom thou sufferest a needless degree of anxiety, shall not be harshly dealt with. We give thee our word for this; therefore lay aside thy scruples, and tell us who they be, and thy father is a free man, and so long as he and thou conduct yourselves with quiet and order, ye shall receive our protection."

"Far be it from me to doubt thy gracious promises; do not thus interpret my refusal, for I am deeply grateful for thy kindness; but in the name of Him to whom we all look for mercy, I beseech thee to remove this impossible condition!"

"What, art thou still obstinate, still unyielding? Then suffer the consequences of thy folly. There are yet means, stubborn girl, to wring from thee what thy rash obstinacy prompts thee to conceal! Begone from our presence, we have listened too long to thy idle prating! Thomas! Thomas! I say, call the guard. Thou shalt indeed go to the prison; but think not to find thy father again until thou hast resolved to comply with our demand!"

"Be it so, then! God alone must be my refuge. Mayest thou one day find with Him the mercy thou deniest me this day!"

The little girl had remained watching the scene with intense interest, and although she did not comprehend all its meaning, she fully understood that the pale maiden was to go to that fearful place, the jail. Leaving her father's side, she hurried to Edith, and taking her hand, looked up imploringly, and said, "Oh, papa, do not send the sweet, sick lady to that wicked place! Naughty father, God is displeased with thee for giving her to the dark man, yonder!" and she hid her sorrowing face in Edith's garments, and wept aloud. Edith stooped and caressed the little one, endeavoring to soothe her distress, her own tears falling the while, "Oh," she cried, "Henriette was right, an angel is indeed here, and intercedes in my behalf!"

Governor Endicott was touched by the scene before him, and the artless words of the little girl conveyed an unlooked for reproof. Giving way to a kindly impulse, he said,

"Well, well; cease thy tears, little Charity, the maiden shall go to her father for the present, until we have time to consider what is best to be done further."

"No, no," insisted the child, "her father must go home with her. If you send the pretty lady to the dark house, I will not love you any more. You will not be my dear, kind papa, any longer!"

"My sweet pleader," said Edith, "it is enough. I will ask no more now, but accept this favor with thanks and a daughter's blessing."

"And does it please thee then right well?" looking up into her face doubtingly, with the tears still resting on her round rosy cheeks.

"It pleases me right well, and I thank God, thy father, and thyself, for so dear a privilege!"

"And papa is not a naughty papa now, is he?" asked she, with something of exultation in her tone.

"No," answered Edith, with a smile, while the child, resuming her place by her father, showed her pleasure by laughing and capering at his side once more.

"Perhaps," said the Governor, before they parted, "a few days' reflection will persuade thee to alter thy determination, and in that case thou knowest that thy father has his liberty."

"We are more free confined between prison walls than with conscience in bondage. Again I thank thee for the privilege already accorded me, and will pray God to soften thy heart to remit this stern condition."

"And, after all," he soliloquized, after dismissing her with a few lines to the jailor, "I like her better than if she had consented to betray them. There is loftiness of character as well as delicacy of training in her mien and conduct. But alas for the delusions of

the human mind! Why will men stray thus from the straight and only path which leads to life?"

* * * * *

With a heart full of grateful emotions Edith took the nearest way that led to the prison. Joe Makefast, who answered her summons, upon opening the door, stood back in mute surprise. The pallor of recent illness and excessive fatigue overspread the face of the heroic girl, but the peace that dwelt within spoke sweetly through her weariness. In his wonder at beholding so unexpected a visitor, Joe forgot entirely to read the note she had placed in his hand, but stood regarding her with a vacant stare. She motioned him to do so, and passing in took her seat quietly, and awaited his somewhat tardy motions with some impatience. The mystified keeper read and re-read the note, turned it to the light and inspected the signature from various points of view. Then, after another penetrating glance at the maiden, he beckoned her to follow him, and, leading her through several damp and winding passages, finally admitted her into the apartment occupied by her father.

Poor Edith was not prepared for the change which a few weeks had made in her father's appearance, and her heart sank at sight of his feeble and wasted figure. His surprise at seeing her was lessened by the fact that she had privately informed him some days before of her intention. Yet his embrace, as he

clasped her tenderly to his bosom, had in it a touch of pity which Edith understood too well. And as they sat down side by side, with their hands clasped in each others, they felt that it was not new man's feeble power they feared again to separate them.

At the request of the prisoner Edith related her morning's adventure, and her conduct received his warm approval.

"My child, thou hast done only what was right. These walls shall receive my last breath ere I will accept a freedom basely purchased. Never, whatever be the inducements offered thee, never swerve from the true course. Though thy heart be sorely tempted, yield not, and remember that death itself would be sweet to me compared to the pain I should feel in seeing thee depart from the line of truth. Be firm always in that wherein thou hast the approval of God and thy conscience, and fear to do wrong far more than the power of man to injure thee."

After locking the door upon the young girl and her father, the poor jailor still remained in the deepest perplexity.

"Well," he exclaimed, "what 'll come next, I wonder! It's the first time in the course of my experience that any body ever asked to be let in here. It's a privilege, a great privilege, I know," and poor Joe laughed at what he considered his own witticism;

"but ain't it curious, now, that people in ginerall don't 'pear to be sensible of it? But what *is* this young creetur, any way; that's what I'd like to be informed of? Bees she an ooman, or bees she a sperrit? Come, now, answer me that?" he demanded, in the tone of one who has silenced every auditor. "*I* should say," he continued, looking at the empty chairs around him with an air of triumph, as if he were the only individual present capable of explaining the mystery—"I should say it was a sperrit with a bonnet on!

"I don't like it nohow, for lookkee here," continuing to address his attentive audience, "it was some sich creetur as this that let the 'Postle Peter out o' jail—yes, and what come o' the keepers?" Here Joe thrust both hands in his pantaloons' pockets, and continued for some time walking up and down, and shaking his head very uneasily.

"But, ha!" he presently exclaimed, again triumphant, "*that* sperrit did n't bring an order! But if this bein' had a come in the midnight hour, and had a stood over my bed, and said, 'Joseph Makefast, rise up and unlock the prison door,' would I a riz? Yes, that I would, and every hair on my scalp would a done the same, and I would a said that it was n't flesh and blood commanded me!

"Lord save us! now I see it all. It's her as was drowned, and her sperrit's come back to haunt the earth! And that letter—where is it, any way?"

The poor jailor was now thoroughly terrified. He hastily searched his pockets for the governor's order, and failing to find it, retraced his steps through each passage, and vainly sought for it in every nook and corner. In fact, he had dropped it in the prisoner's room, and the father and daughter were at that moment looking over it together.

"Oh, Lord a ma'cy! it was n't a letter at all. What 'll become of me? It was altogether a plan of the enemy to git me in his clutches. I'll lock the doors, and run up to his honor's worship's the minister's, and fetch him right down. But what's the use of locks? what's locks to sperrits? Did n't Peter's angel strike the chains off with a touch of its walkin'-stick? Oh! dear, dear, dear, I'm a ruined man, and all for livin' this way, so lonesome like! Now if I only had a help-meet this would never a happened. I'll get one, that I will. I'll speak to Lisbet to-morrow, though, in ginerel, I know women's cowardly, too, but for all that there sharper witted than men be, and it ain't sich an easy thing to make fools on 'em!"

Poor Joe was almost in despair. He was quite convinced that Edith was a visitor from the spirit-land, and whenever he was obliged to pass near her father's door, he felt his scalp creep, and a cold shiver run over him, much as I myself have felt, when a child, in passing a grave-yard in the evening, or, when in the dark, I have embodied an indistinct fear in some out-

line imperfectly defined. Joseph's eyes half started from their sockets as he looked that way, momentarily expecting to behold a supernatural appearance; and when the hour came to open the prisoner's door and leave him at liberty to take his airing in the jail-yard, he could not muster courage to do so. There was nothing in the order (which he resolved to insist upon) to warrant him in doing so now, and besides, if they wanted to get out they could just as well go through the key-hole invisible, or through the grating of the narrow window.

When the dinner-hour arrived, he had another struggle. The sperrit would not surely want any thing to eat. Should he therefore carry in a double allowance of food for the meal? After due reflection, he concluded it was more prudent to do so, that by betraying his suspicions he might subject himself to some wrathful visitation, and therefore he decided to convey to the apartment an amount of food sufficient for two humanly constituted individuals.

Accordingly, fortifying himself with texts of Scripture and ejaculatory prayers, he entered the cell with knees sniting each other, and hands trembling. It happened that the safety of a bowl of savory soup was endangered by his agitation, which Edith seeing, she stepped forward and took it from his hand.

"We must not lose any portion of our dinner," she said, "for I suppose, like careless children who spill

their porridge, we shall be punished by not being allowed a fresh supply, and beside, as I have eaten nothing to-day, and exercise has given an edge to appetite, I should be loth to see the loss of this goodly 'mess of pottage.' Come, my father, for if thou art not wary, I may devour thy share of our meal as well as my own."

This remark savored so strongly of humanity, that Joseph almost forgot his alarm, and looked "the sperrit" in the face quiet courageously.

"Good Joseph, thou didst not come to let my father out of his cage this morning."

"I crave pardon," said Joseph quite humbly, though with the air of one who was not rashly to be drawn into conversation, "I—I—it was n't in the order, mistress."

"Oh, then, it was because of my presence. Nay, I think thou needst not fear I shall be in haste to get away, since I overcame some difficulties in getting here."

"Joseph is in the right, however," said her father, "and we will forego the privilege until the opportunity offers to obtain permission."

"The old fox!" said Joseph, as he closed the door behind him, "he thinks he can get out now, and no thanks to me, and as for the—. Well, she looks more like a human bein' than she did—but I'm not to be juggled by her—not I. She speaks pleasant-like too,

but it may all be to get on the blind side of me. 'Ain't eat nothing to-day'—how should she? Soup ain't very plenty I reckon in the regents she came from. And the 'mess of pottage' she spoke of—she thought I didn't see through that, I reckon—but I do. She thinks she'll trick me as Jacob did his blind father. But I ain't so dim-eyed as she thinks for—no I ain't. I'll keep one eye on her any way."

As Edith said, her walk had quickened her appetite, and her father seeing this, ate his meal with an unusual relish. Still the daughter stole many an anxious glance toward the pallid face of her parent, and although she strove to enliven their meal with affectionate efforts at cheerfulness, she succeeded with difficulty in concealing her anxiety and disguising the fact that there lay at her heart a sickening weight of apprehension.

Several days passed away, during which Edith strove to devise some means to obtain her father's liberty. On account of the condition of his health she was doubly anxious for his release, for she hoped the free, pure air of heaven would do much toward restoring the strength of which the last few weeks had deprived him. She hesitated about making another appeal to the Governor, lest she should be again assailed on the subject of her undiscovered benefactors; and, on the other hand, she trembled lest her silence should be made a pretext for further restrictions upon him.

Her appearance among the other prisoners, or those of them who were likewise allowed the privilege of the jail yard, created no slight sensation, for already had Joseph's suspicions been whispered among them. In consequence of this, they with sly looks avoided her, and wherever she moved, she soon saw that she was an object to be shunned. She attributed this to their impressions of her religious belief, and continued to bestow kind and pitying looks and actions, as far as opportunities offered, where she received in return only forbidding glances, or a silent and unthankful stare. There was no criminal among them, however degraded, who would not have felt himself contaminated by intercourse with these misguided heretics, and no crime, whatever its character, which did not, in their eyes, call for more sympathy than that of being a Quaker.

One morning John Morrison and his daughter received a summons to appear before the council. As they prepared to obey it, Edith's heart almost sank within her with fear and apprehension. Her father appeared to be quite unmoved, and seemed absorbed in thought, and when Edith timidly besought him to be cautious in using language which might incense their judges, he only answered—"When they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak."

When they entered the council-chamber, at a sign

from Mr. Mildman, the prisoner's hat was removed by an attendant. This was done to prevent the discussion of that subject, which the minister knew would be pretty sure to follow, were it not in some such manner averted. John Morrison stood erect and undaunted in the presence of his judges, as if, conscious of rectitude, he knew no cause for fear. His calm exterior afforded a striking contrast to the appearance of those before whom he stood arraigned, as with bent brows and angry looks some regarded him, while the few who inclined toward his side exhibited in their countenances the uneasy fear of failure. The prisoner rested his arm upon the shoulder of the trembling girl at his side, who cast an anxious and hurried glance along the line of faces turned upon her, as if hoping to discover that of some sympathizing friend to whom she might look for aid in a dire extremity.

"John Morrison, if thou hast any thing to say for thyself, thou art at liberty to speak."

"Friend, I would inquire wherefore I am considered worthy of these bonds."

"Thou hast come in among us, with others of thy people, to sow dissension in our quiet vineyard, to trample on our laws, and to corrupt the minds of our youth with false and dangerous doctrines."

"Can any one present show that he has seen me or known me to be engaged in either of the ways thou speakest of?"

"We know well enough that if we can not say so, it is true, and that thou upholdest those who are busied in these mischiefs. Dost thou not refuse to bear arms in the service of thy rightful sovereign, to pay thy dues toward the support of God's church and its ministers, and dost thou not hold strange and abominable doctrines, by which delusion the young and ignorant are in danger of being led away?"

"We refuse to bear arms in obedience to the command of our Great Master, who said, 'My kingdom is not of this world, else would my servants fight.' And counting ourselves first of all His servants, and secondly the servants of the king, we must obey the commands of our Sovereign Lord, and deny only such claims of our earthly monarch as are in conflict with them. 'Freely ye have received, freely give.' 'Without money and without price.' What is more plain, would ye but listen to its teaching? And for the third accusation thou bringest against us—"

"If it please your Excellency"—broke in Mr. Mildman—"we have heard all this till we are thrice weary. There is little profit in discussing these knotty questions, for this is a stiff-necked people, and not to be turned from its errors. Let us, therefore, pass to the especial subject before us, which is the individual conduct of the prisoner. From all I can learn, he has taken little part in the turbulent conduct of some of

this sect, and was always a retired and peaceful member of the community."

"I thank thee, my friend, that thou speakest in my behalf; but think not to serve me by setting me apart from my brethren. My mode of life has been quiet, for my feeble state of health prevents me laboring as I desire to do in the Lord's vineyard."

"Thou shouldst thank the Lord that it prevents thee running thy neck into a noose then!" exclaimed the Secretary.

"Methinks," said Mr. Harding, "there is little mischief to be feared from an old man who hath already one foot in the grave. Wherefore should we spend our valuable time in this discussion?"

"Thou canst not be answerable, brother," said a reverend divine, "for what he may do of evil. And if the old tree is decayed and broken, the young shoot remains to take root and flourish. Better to destroy the tares now than leave them to swallow up a goodly harvest."

"Better still," said Mr. Mildman, "to engraft upon the young tree a precious shoot, which shall in time bring forth an hundredfold to fill our garners."

The first speaker shook his head doubtingly. "Ah, there is still poison at the root! We should not leave a fiber of it to encumber the soil. Young and old, root and branch, should be gathered and burned; yea,

none should be spared from the fire that consumes and purifies !”

“ We will speak to this young sprig of heresy, brethren. Maiden, hast thou reflected upon our late offer of clemency ?”

“ I have. And reflection has served only to strengthen my former resolution. I beseech thee spare me that. I can not do otherwise, if my life should be the forfeit !”

“ But what if thy *father's* life be the forfeit ? Know that thy obstinacy may send him to the gallows in company with those who are already condemned to suffer death for their offenses !”

“ Edith, lift up thy spirit in prayer. Lean on the Rock of strength, and fear not !”

Edith was deadly pale, and there was untold agony in her accents, as she cried—“ Oh, let my life atone for it, but touch not his whom the angel of death has already beckoned from afar.” She threw herself upon her knees as she said this, and raised her streaming eyes toward heaven.

“ Arise, my daughter. This position belongs only to a higher court, to a Judge not swayed by human passions.”

“ Let her alone, old man ! Had thy people more of the spirit of humility it might be better for you ; but you come here to demand what you should ask, to claim what it would better become you to sue for.”

"I know not that we should sue for the privilege of worshipping God in our own peculiar way. I am yet to learn that it becomes frail man to ask permission of his erring brother to follow the unerring guide within—the lamp of Truth."

"You shall know somewhat more than you seem to know ere you are done with us. Brethren, you see this girl before you. She steadily refuses to give up to justice those persons, who, in defiance of our wholesome laws have dared to afford shelter and protection to one of her accursed sect. We are in the midst of quicksands, and shall we not know where they lie before our tender youth be drawn into the vortex? Is our authority to be set aside by every puny child who is thus incited to rebel against it? No. I tell you it must not be. She *shall* yield, or let her father's blood be upon her own head!"

"My blood shall not be upon her, but on thee—on thee, stern, cruel man, shall it be! He who looks down upon the deeds of this day and of other days—the deeds ye have wrought and still purpose to work upon us whom ye call accursed—He will demand of you—'Where is thy brother?' And how think ye to conceal from him your blood-guiltiness?"

"I pray you leave the girl to me," said Mr. Mildman. "Mild measures may be of more avail than stringent ones. Give her more time, and it may be she will at last yield to this demand."

"Alas," exclaimed the other minister—"how hast thou fallen away, my brother! I grieve and mourn in spirit over the sad change that has come upon thee—upon thee, who wast once our pillar of strength, and our bulwark!"

"We all know that our reverend brother doth of late, lean to a mild policy (I trust not unwisely nor with excess of tenderness), and we will not now be ruled by his counsel. The girl has already had ample time given her, and now for the last time I demand of thee, maiden, thy decision."

"Hear first what I have to say," exclaimed the prisoner—"You bring this tender child hither, and you offer her terms by which my life is to be lost or won. In order to comply with your demand, she must peril the peace of a now happy family, to whom she owes her life; and because she will not do this you threaten her with her father's blood. Know then that did she comply with your demand, that life you offer me on such terms I would disdain to accept. Take from me, if you will, the gift which God gave, make this child an orphan and an outcast—but ye can never rob us of a dearer treasure. You have no power to deprive us of the peace of an approving conscience."

"For one," exclaimed Mr. Harding, now rising, "I disclaim all share in these unjust proceedings. If your Excellency really intends to execute this violent threat, I will here resign my seat in this council.

Brethren—I am myself a father, and were that maiden mine own child, I should be proud to call her so; and should she basely yield, I could almost find it in my heart to cast her forever from my bosom! But you do not, surely, intend to do this thing. I wrong you by supposing it! It would, indeed, be something hitherto unheard of in a court of justice.”

“What, Gideon Harding, did not thy voice uphold our decree against this people? Are we to change our course with every shifting breeze? Thou knowest right well that this man has already transgressed our laws and set our authority at naught, and that he deserves to suffer the penalty!”

“God forgive me that false step! Would I could repair the error; and I will strive to do it. This man is sick and aged, let him depart. God himself hath measured his span, and shall we presume to touch a life whose period is thus noted?”

“There is nothing to be feared from him,” cried another, “let the old man go. There is no warrant for pushing these matters to such extremes.”

“Beware,” said the aforesaid divine, “lest like Jonah, ye be swallowed up by God’s wrath for refusing to pronounce his judgments.”

“Thank God I am not afraid to do my duty,” exclaimed the Governor. “Call the guard! Jailor take this old man back to prison. Nay—touch not the maiden—she goes not yet! John Morrison, hear the

sentence we pronounce against thee! Thou shalt go hence to the prison—”.

He was interrupted by a piercing cry, and Edith fell back into her father's arms in a fainting fit. As he held her lifeless form to his bosom, he raised his trembling voice in prayer :

“Father of mercies, take this the only child of my love to thy bosom ! Call her spirit back to thee, and never let it return to inhabit this earthly tenement ! And thou, stern, unmerciful man, beware lest God's curse light upon thy household ! Tremble lest thou live to see the children of thy home blighted and cut off as thou wouldst crush this tender vine !”

Governor Endicott's heart was not all stone, and at these words his thoughts turned upon the little girl who had pleaded Edith's cause before. From the first he never meant to carry into effect his cruel threat, but incensed at Edith's obstinacy (as he considered it), he determined to try her to the last stretch, thinking she would finally yield. But now that he was convinced of her firmness in adhering to what she considered a principle of duty, he regretted having carried the matter so far, and would gladly have yielded, could he have done so without appearing to be overborne by opposition. Mr. Mildman probably read his thoughts, for he said, “Perhaps your Excellency will consent to defer this sentence for the present. Let them return to the prison now, if it please you, and we will further

discuss the question on another occasion. We must not utterly deny the claims of humanity; the old man himself is exhausted with the length of our debate, and the maiden, as you all see, is in no condition to endure it longer. Let it not be said of us that even our enemies had not mercy at our hands!"

"Ay, and ye would be so merciful that our whole land would feel the plague, and our households be smitten, our young ones be led into error, and our seasons for peaceful worship made the time for angry and seditious disturbances."

"Brethren, let not dissensions invade our council, and if we err, be it on the side of mercy, so that when we come to stand ourselves before the high tribunal, we may hope to obtain it even as we now bestow."

"Friend," said John Morrison, as he stood once more before them, while his daughter, now bitterly weeping, clung convulsively to his bosom, "ask not for me the mercy denied to my brethren. But if ye shed our blood it will cry to God from this soil, and future generations shall point to it with sorrow, and your children and children's children vainly strive to efface the shameful stain!"

"Take them away, jailor! He will provoke us to greater severity than we intend."

Edith had been so much overcome by the occurrences of the morning that it required both her father's feeble assistance and that of the jailor to aid her in

reaching the prison. But she did not long allow herself to be thus overcome, remembering how much her father stood in need of her attention ; and when the jailor brought in their noonday meal, he found John Morrison, exhausted by excitement and fatigue, reclining upon his bed, and Edith sitting beside him bathing his hands and forehead. The poor girl looked so sad and weary that Joe's kind heart reproached him for his hasty judgment of her. In fact, he felt for them more sympathy than he dared express, except by an awkward officiousness, which was easily understood, and which received their gratitude.

* * * * *

When Mr. Harding returned to his home, Alice noticed that he was unusually quiet, and even sad. Throughout the day he continued silent and abstracted, as if something weighed heavily upon his mind, and even his daughter's affectionate caresses were received with only a half-conscious air.

"My father, something, I am sure, weighs upon thy spirits. Is it aught in which a daughter's sympathy can bear part?"

"Alice, I have seen to-day a sight which moved my very soul! Two prisoners were brought before the council, an aged, white-haired man, and a tender maiden. But why do I grieve thee with the tale? Thy cheek is pale at the very name of misery!"

"Go on, I pray thee, my father! Of what crime were they accused?"

"Of belonging to that strange, deluded people, the Quakers. Would to Heaven I had never seen one of their sect, for since yon poor wretches were condemned to die, I have not known a night of peaceful slumber. And yet I did all I could to save them!"

"But the prisoners, dear papa—the old man and his daughter, saidst thou not?—what more of them?"

"She is his daughter, and a brave girl, too, I warrant thee! None who witnessed her conduct this day but were forced to respect her motives. Poor child, poor child; her lot is one of hardship."

"And what was done? Oh, father, they could not be harsh to *her*—to one so tender and so frail!"

"Too harsh, too cold and stern! Ah, Alice, little knowest thou to what extremes man's heart will sometimes lead him! Alas, why should he deem that religion demands of him to forget every touch of pity and humanity. I like not these harsh doctrines, and surely our incarnate Lord taught us a far different lesson in his intercourse with earth!"

"But, father, had thy voice no weight? Alas! were there none to take the maiden's part? Were all turned against them—against a feeble sick old man and a defenseless girl?"

"No, not *all*, Alice. Thank God all hearts are not so hard. Woe to those judges who show not the mercy

they must one day need ! But my child, thou tremblest, and—yes, thou art weeping ! I should not have told thee of this. But do not grieve so, my darling. They dare not go to extremes in this. There are those who will move in it whose strength and influence will force their enemies to yield. Be encouraged, Alice, I will with my feeble might assist this brave girl and her father ; and let them do to me as they list, she shall not want protection. This shall be my task, and God grant that it may atone for that one fault—that cruel error !”

“ Oh ! thanks, thanks, my father,” cried Alice joyfully, as she threw her arms around him. “ They dare not call thee to account for what thou doest, and Ed—, that is, Mr. Mildman tells me that the maiden is worthy his own and thy protection. With two such powerful friends, she can not come to evil.”

“ I would, my darling, that these men had one grain of thy compassionate nature ! But, methinks, that such gentle virtues are given but to few. Could they be more equally dispensed, there were no need of any other law than that of love to bind us. I fear me, dear child, if thou givest to every unfortunate stranger the measure of sympathy thou bestowest on these, that thy whole life will be a scene of grief for others’ sorrow.”

“ Dear papa, do not praise me,” said Alice, as a flush of shame dyed her cheeks and forehead. “ Thou dost not know my secret heart, what a vain and treacherous thing it can sometimes be !”

"I commend thee all the more, my darling, that thy modesty would disclaim all merit. It is ever thus with the pure and good. Humility is the crown of virtue, and well fitted is this dear brow to wear her chaplet!"

"Oh! my father, forbear, I beseech thee. Alas! why do I wear a mask which hides my true character from thine eyes?" and tears of grief and mortification chased one another down the daughter's cheeks.

"Nay, Alice, thy sensibility will one day run away with thee. Thy feelings have been overwrought by the tale I told thee. Come, now, let us forth to the water's side; and haste thee, that we may be in time to see the sparkle of the sunset on the waves."

"Dear child," thought her father, as she hurried to obey his bidding, "it is marvelous what a tender heart she hath! And to see her weep because I praised her. She is a step above humanity, methinks, my own precious darling!"

And what thought Alice? "Woe is me that I am become such a deceiver! But I can not, and will not endure it longer. Why should I be thus bound in his thralldom? This very evening I will speak to him and tell him that my father *must* know the history of my acquaintance with Edith—dear girl, how hard it was for me not to tell him! Oh! that first false step, into what a labyrinth has it led me! Would I had never departed from the open path of truthfulness!"

Late in the evening of this melancholy day, the jailor, to his great joy, received from the Governor's hand an order for the liberation of John Morrison and his daughter, accompanied with permission to remain in their late dwelling until his health should be sufficiently restored to permit him to journey, when they were commanded to depart, and, on penalty of death, forbidden to return to that jurisdiction. This was upon condition of their quiet and orderly behavior during the time of their residence within the town of Boston.

Late as was the hour when Joseph received the order, he hastened with it to the prisoners' apartment. "For I know right well," said he, "that's better to be kept awake by joy than by sorrow, and I warrant me, my pretty mistress 'll lay there and cry all night, and never sleep a wink, and be spilin' the looks of her eyes by morning. It's hard to see 'em cry—I'd prefer a lashin' any day. And women's ways is queer now, ain't they? Yes, indeed, they *are* a curious sect, and I'll vow that Lisbet Lane's the curiousest one of 'em all."

Edith's heart thrilled with joy at the tidings that they were once more free, and new strength seemed to infuse itself into her father's frame.

"Heaven's free air is sweet," he said, "to him who has languished within the narrow bound of prison walls. I would our brethren also could enjoy the blessed privilege of freedom, and since God has so far softened

the stern hearts of these men, it may be that he will further bend them to his gracious will. I trust it will indeed be so. My daughter, let us here bow the knee to Him whose mercy is over all, and offer up the incense of our gratitude, together with our earnest petitions in their behalf."

Accordingly Edith knelt by her father's side, and her spirit was borne on the wings of his petition to the heavenly throne. The jailor, who stood holding the door in his hand, awed by the solemnity of the scene, bent his knee also on the stony floor, and listened in subdued reverence to the language which flowed warm and eloquent from the lips of the imprisoned Quaker.

It was with hearts glowing with gratitude that the young girl and her father sought their rest for the last time beneath the roof of a prison. And when the morning sunshine streamed upon the face of the slumbering maiden, and recalled her from a peaceful dream, she welcomed the warm harbinger as a token from heaven of a happier and brighter day.

The kind jailor was up betimes, and had their simple morning meal neatly spread in his own private apartment. "It wouldn't be jest the thing to let 'em go away on empty stomachs—it would n't reflect credit on the house. And maybe, if I did n't do it, my young mistress would n't have nothin' in their own house to eat, and nobody to get it ready and com'fable like for 'em. I wish his honor the minister had a heard that

prayer. It beats him even—it came so glib and easy-like—talkin's nothing to them Quaker folk, they say. They call 'em heretics, too, and so I 'spose they be, though I should n't a found it out from that prayer. And to hear him callin' down blessins on his enemies! Well, thinks I, old man, Christian as I am I could n't a done it; no, I'm sure I could n't, and if I had as little breath as you, I'd not spend it on folks as hates me! But I'll jest go and listen if I hear 'em a-stirrin'."

He did hear them stirring, and after a civil knock upon the door which he had locked the night before only, as he assured them, with an apologetic air—"to be certain that no harm should come to them"—he entered, and delivering his invitation to breakfast with awkward courtesy, received a gratifying and hearty acceptance.

After the meal was ended and Edith had gathered up the few articles belonging to them, they thanked the jailor for his kind civility, and slipping into his hand a more substantial proof of gratitude, bade him farewell and left the prison.

Joseph closed the door behind them and proceeded to examine the parting token. "Gold!" he exclaimed, "well now, I did n't expect that. I hope he hain't robbed hisself to give it to me! It looks like the true metal" (examining it on both sides), "and has the proper ring" (throwing it down); "but I don't know, it may be fairy gold for all that. I never could

see what become of that note of the Governor's, but if close keepin' will hold this it shan't serve me the trick the letter did; and if it don't get away through the key-hole or turn to a wooden button or a wiper, or some sich, I'll see if it won't buy a marriage token that 'll take Lisbet's fancy. Aha! that's the way to captivate the female sect. Jest dazzle their eyes with a trinket or a gaudy-colored gown, and while they're taken up with lookin' at it, slip on the bridle—and when they're once married to a man and know they're tied for life, heaven knows they'll stick like a burr, and follow him from Dan to Beersheba! Hows'ever, Lisbet's not one to be driv, not she; and after all, I don't know as marriage is such a *dreadful* happy condition. It's sartain to bring more mouths to feed, and the devil only (forgive us) knows how many of 'em may come. Then there's chance knocks a body gits—and curtain lectures as I've heard on, and there's the onruly member, ugh—Lisbet's tongue is not the *shortest* tongue in Boston neither! Hows'ever, I don't know as I'd mind all these disadvantages put together as much as that sing'lar way women folks has of goin' into sterick fits! Poor Tom Jones has got a stericky wife, and he says there ain't nothin' on earth to compare it to. Tom ain't what he used to be, neither. He used to hold up his head so pert, and look as bold as a fightin'-cock. I've been there sometimes when he's put on the old way, and only let

his gossip come in, and down goes his fine feathers, and he drags along for all the world like a rooster as has been out in the rain. If I thought Lisbet was stericky!" Here Joseph shook his head, doubtingly, and remained for some moments in silent contemplation. He seemed to be weighing each side of the question gravely in his mind. At last it appeared to be settled to his satisfaction. His air expressed a manly confidence in his own abilities. He felt himself prepared for emergencies. "Well, well, may be Lisbet is a trifle skittish, but I'd rather have her so than too solemn. Now there's that young mistress, why her very smile is so sorrowful that it melts a body's heart down just as if it was made of bees'-wax. Poor young thing! it ain't much wonder, for I guess she sees that the old 'un ain't long for this world. Well, I'm glad they're gone, any way. It's been a weight on my mind, and if I was n't as kind to 'em in the first place as I might a been, why I made up for it at the end. But bless my soul, there hain't a critter of these folks had their breakfast!"

. So Joseph, by way of a charm against witchcraft being exercised upon his golden treasure, with which he promised himself he should purchase what to him would be as the world's wealth to a monarch, placed it between the leaves of his Bible, and locking it in a secret drawer, went about his usual avocations. Several times during the day he came to take a look at

his treasure, and finding it still there, gained confidence each time in its reality, and when night came he retired to his pillow to dream of wealth and happiness. His dream was that of prince, of noble, and of peasant—it was the dream of the whole slumbering world!

CHAPTER XIX.

EDITH and her father reached their humble home, and had the satisfaction of finding that it exhibited no marks of intrusion, except that the Quaker's books had entirely disappeared and were replaced by others of a different character. They were such as were deemed helpful to persons groping in the hidden ways of the enemy.

In Edith's little pantry was found a covered basket containing provisions ready prepared for their use, as well as two or three small bottles of excellent wine—a luxury not to be purchased at that day in the orderly town of Boston—and doubly acceptable to the sick man in his enfeebled condition.

"Alice must have done this," exclaimed Edith; and she was right. Alice contrived that her father himself should propose the matter to her, and as it may be believed, it met with her hearty co-operation. But she did not tell him the history of her acquaintance with the prisoners in whom he seemed to take so warm an interest, for upon hearing they were once more at liberty, she feared that by doing so she should

deprive herself of the privilege of occasionally visiting Edith in her quiet home.

After carefully attending to her father's comfort, our heroine ascended to her chamber with a heart full of the most powerful emotions. She looked around upon each familiar object with a sense of disappointment at not experiencing the pleasure she had promised herself in beholding them again. Involuntarily her thoughts turned to that other home where she had been so kindly cherished, and the contrast, as that picture arose before her fancy, increased the cheerless aspect of her own. There, for awhile, did she experience a sweet relief from the conflict of her eventful life, and lived in an atmosphere of love and sympathy. But now, once more she was alone, struggling with the adversities of her lot, and dreading to look into the sad and solemn future which she was soon to tread, unsupported by human strength, and uncheered by human sympathy. Too well she knew that her father's days on earth must be of short duration; and beyond that little space of time all was darkness. She could not ask his life, because she knew that her petition must be vain. She could only bow to her heavenly Parent's will, almost crushed beneath the consciousness of her weakness, and veiling her eyes against a future so cheerless and so overwhelming!

Edith had not yet recovered from her recent illness. Her frame had not regained its wonted strength, nor

her mind its accustomed energy. Her faith was dim, her hope was clouded. Perhaps it was the glimpse she had had into something happier and brighter, but in which she was forbidden to participate, which made her now feel that her lot was a harder one than she could well endure. The feeling filled her with despondency—we had almost said despair. From thoughts like these it was her custom to seek refuge in prayer—now, that desire seemed dead within her soul, and there was something rebellious in the mood with which she contemplated her lot. Even the circumstance of their release from prison failed to awaken her gratitude, and she thought it had been almost preferable to share the fate of those who were soon to die a death of violence than to languish thus in helpless and hopeless misery.

But the habit of pouring her sorrows into the ever-listening ear of her heavenly Parent was too strongly fixed upon Edith for her to continue long in this unhappy condition, and soon, when the violence of her emotions had been spent in tears, and a more calm and quiet frame of mind succeeded, she humbled herself before the throne of Him whom she had lately been almost ready to reproach as a hard and cruel taskmaster, and obtained the needful strength to support her in the exercise of her arduous duties.

As she arose from her knees, a slight sound attracted her attention, and turning hastily around, she was as-

tonished at the discovery that she was not alone. The individual who thus intruded upon her privacy was one whose appearance was calculated to surprise, if not to alarm her. The figure was that of a tall and stately Indian girl, clad in a garb which denoted some little intercourse with her own civilized race. Her dress consisted of a short garment of scarlet cloth, reaching to the knees, and confined around the waist by a belt of wampum. A long scarf of the same material was wrapped around the upper part of her form, and so disposed as to cover her bosom, and the whole was ornamented with strings of beads and the perforated teeth of animals. The same ornaments bound her arms and ankles, and her feet were encased in moccasins. Her long raven hair hung loose around her neck and shoulders, while a string of acorns were wound several times about her head, and a dagger glittered in her girdle. She stood in Edith's presence with a mien at once proud and humble, her arms crossed upon her bosom, and her eyes regarding her with a subdued expression, which bestowed, rather than solicited, pity.

Edith did not intend that her countenance should betray alarm, although she feared that this girl might be only one of a party concealed about the house or neighborhood, and that their designs were hostile. Her pale cheek grew a shade paler at the thought, and her voice was slightly tremulous, as she demanded,

"Who art thou, maiden? and what has brought thee hither?"

Great was her surprise when the girl replied in English, as clear and distinct as her own:

"Maretah fled from her father's wigwam. She is weary and seeks rest."

"Didst thou come hither alone?"

"The Indian girl flew like the swift-footed roe over the prairie. One only followed, and," laying her hand upon her dagger, "his step pursues her no longer."

A cold shudder ran over Edith's frame at this; the girl saw her fear, and continued:

"Fear nothing. The pale maiden is sad—the old man is sick; let Maretah be their friend! She will dwell here, and her hand shall prepare their meat and their corn. She will bring the healing root from the forest, and when my sister weeps her tears shall fall on Maretah's bosom."

"I thank thee, maiden," replied Edith, as tears filled her eyes at this unlooked-for sympathy. "Thou hast journeyed far, and must be both hungry and weary. Rest until I bring thee food, and when thou art refreshed thou shalt tell my father thy story. He will judge kindly and wisely what is best to be done."

"Maretah has rested here since the sun went down behind yonder hill. Let us go to the old man; if he is kind, I will call him 'father,' and if he will not hear me, I must depart once more."

Accordingly, Edith led her into her father's presence, and briefly related to him as much of her history as she herself knew. At his request, Maretah, who seated herself upon the floor at his bedside, proceeded to relate her story :

"Long ago, when Maretah's years were few, the warriors of our tribe went forth to battle. Four moons passed over us before their songs of triumph rang through our valley, and the youths and maidens answered their shouts with cries of welcome. They brought with them trophies such as we had never seen before, taken from the pale-faced strangers, who came in winged canoes across the mighty waters, and made their homes upon our fathers' graves. My mother wept in secret when she saw the scalps of fair-haired maidens and tender babes hanging to their belts, and heard Ouana tell how their fathers and their youths fought to save them, and how mothers prayed for their little ones, and with their dying lips kissed their last breath away.

"There were prisoners among them, too. Our women pitied them, and washed their wounds, and gave them food ; but they were doomed to die. On the morrow they were bound and fastened to separate trees that our young warriors might learn to cast the tomahawk at their foes. There was a pale, sad boy, and he was my father's captive. Maretah could not see him die, for he was beautiful as the morning, and

I loved him. My mother, too, begged for his life, for my sake. She was Ouana's heart's core, and he could not refuse her prayer, so he spared Albert's life, and bade him teach his little sister the white man's cunning arts and strange language. I loved to sit at his feet and hear him tell of the wonders that lay far over the great ocean where his home was; of the land of your fathers—its mighty cities—its powerful kings—its wars and its glory. He told me, too, that there was another God than the great spirits of good and evil, and that it was for love of Him that he and his brethren fled from their homes to seek a refuge in the land of the savage. Oh, Albert! for thy sake I seek the God of thy worship, and in those happy hunting-grounds where thou dwellest, forget not to watch for the swift footsteps of Maretah!"

For a few moments the Indian girl paused, overcome by her emotions, then raising her head proudly, as if ashamed of having betrayed her agitation, she continued:

"Day after day I sat at Albert's feet and learned of him. It was my joy to watch his eye and catch his words, and I learned his language so well, that sometimes my father took me with him on his journeys of peace and traffic with the white man, that I might speak between them. Thus I learned where the track lay that led to his dwelling.

"Magawan was a young brave, and Ouana loved

him, and promised to give him his daughter. He came to the door of our wigwam, but I would not follow him. My father bade me go, but I went not. My heart was with the captive, and as I could not be the wife of my father's foe, I would go with none. Magawan saw I loved his enemy, and persuaded my father to bind him to the fatal stake. I flew to his side, and with a stroke cut the bands which held him. My father's anger was kindled, and he bade them tighten Albert's cords, and, with his own hand, bound me to a neighboring tree that I might see him die. He was my brother; he had taught me to love the Christian's God, and dried my tears when our low-voiced mother departed. Yes; I saw Magawan's tomahawk drink his life's-blood! He died, and 'Ma-retah' was the last word on Albert's lips!

"For days our spirits would not separate. I could not let him go without me to the mighty Father, but my soul lingered on the borders of his happy home, and strove to enter the gate through which his had passed away. But I was forced to return. I came back to earth with a fever consuming my heart—it was the thirst for revenge! Then I remembered Albert's teachings, and felt that if I would meet him again, I must not stain my hand with blood. What then? I could not live to see his murderer before me, day by day, only waiting until strength returned to my wasted limbs, to bid me once more follow him to his wigwam

and become his slave! I felt that so sure as I obeyed that command of Ouana, to become his wife, that it would only be to lie by his side until I saw him sleeping, and then to plunge my knife into his heart!

"At length the day came when my father, pointing to the setting-sun, bade me behold it. I answered not, but my heart grew hard and cold beneath his stern look. Then, stretching his hand toward the eastern sky, he said, 'When his step is seen there Magawan comes to claim thee. Maretah will go!'

"I would have thrown myself at his feet, and prayed him to let me live only for him—to let me nurse his coming age, and sit beside his sick bed—but I knew his eye too well. My prayer would have been vain.

"When night spread her dark wings over us, I fled. Swifter than the deer's foot was mine, over the prairie, and toward the white man's dwelling. I heard the howl of the hungry wolf in my track, the eyes of the wild-cat glared on me through the night, but Maretah feared them not. I thought of Albert and his cruel death, and there was a wolf within my bosom more fierce than the one in my path. It was this I fled from. He had told me that your God once gave you a Holy Book in which his commands were written, and Albert's voice rang in my ears—'Thou shalt do no murder!'

"When the step of the mighty hunter was first seen in the east I was far from my father's wigwam. All

day I journeyed on, but when evening fell, I heard their cries behind me. In the heart of a great tree I concealed myself until they had passed me by—all but Magawan! With a tiger's scent he followed my retreat. His laugh of triumph, as he saw me, filled me with rage. Nearer and nearer he came, the fire of his eyes burning into my heart. The hand that slew Albert was stretched out to seize another victim. That moment I forgot the voice of my beloved—I forgot the white man's God, and with a spring, I plunged my knife into his bosom. This blade—"and she drew it from her belt, and raised the hand that held it toward Heaven—"this blade drank his life. Albert was avenged! But, oh! Christians, can your God forgive?"

"Maretah," said John Morrison, after a short silence, "I grieve that thou didst rashly stain thy hand with a brother's blood—but know that the God we worship is ever ready to forgive the sins of his repentant children. 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay,' He saith, and to Him shouldst thou have left the stroke of retribution. Yet I know, my child, that thou wast sorely pressed, and considering the character of thy birth and nurture, thou didst well restrain thy hand. But Maretah, if thou wilt worship the white man's God thou must learn the lesson of forgiveness. In His holy word thou wilt find a guide for thy uncertain footsteps, and a lamp unto thy pathway."

"For Albert's sake I seek the white man's God. In the dark hour which tore his spirit from its dwelling, that God was by his side, and sent death smiling to his lips. He gave him power to pray for his enemies, and told him to call upon the poor Indian girl to be a Christian."

"It boots not to tell thee, maiden, that for Himself thou must love our heavenly Parent. Yet, if thou art first won to Him through an earthly affection, be it so, for as soon as knowledge of Him, and of His great and wondrous love to us doth penetrate thy soul, thou shalt be led to adore Him with feelings beyond those which we bestow upon earthly and perishing objects. If thou desire to tarry with us, thou art welcome to the shelter of our dwelling, and we will endeavor to instruct thee in the knowledge thou art seeking."

"Thanks, my father ! Maretah will stay."

"But Maretah, thou canst have no need of that dangerous and deadly weapon which thou wearest. It may be the means of leading thee into further crime, which may not be attended with palliating circumstances. We must put away from us the means of temptation, if we would not fall into its snare."

"Fear not, my father. There is but one life which Maretah's knife shall ever turn against now."

"My child, what meanest thou? Such purposes can not be reconciled with the principles of the religion of Christ. Wilt thou again do murder?"

"No. The life I spoke of was mine own. Maretah listens for the steps of her pursuers, and when she hears their echo, she has sworn that this knife shall again become her friend!"

It was in vain that the Quaker sought to convince her of the error of her purpose. No arguments could persuade the Indian girl that her life was not her own, or that the crime of self-destruction was greater than the disgrace of returning a captive to her tribe. She yielded to Edith's wish that she should change her wild attire for habiliments of a more civilized character, although her awkward movements under such restraint provoked a smile from her kind protectress: yet she insisted upon wearing, concealed in her bosom, the dagger, which was to save her from disgrace and misery.

Little reason had Edith and her father to regret the accident which brought the Indian girl to their home. In the duties of housekeeping Edith found her an invaluable assistant, and her kindness and tenderness as a nurse elicited the warmest praises of the invalid. Though scarce herself older than Edith, she was watchful of her as a mother of her child, and often when she was weary would persuade her to recline upon her bed, and sitting beside her, would sing in a low musical chant, some tale of forest love or warfare, or interesting legend of the prairie. In return, Edith instructed her in letters, of which she was not ignor-

rant, as well as in the use of the needle and other arts of civilized female life ; and many an otherwise desolate hour was pleasantly wiled away in her society.

Yet we can not say but Edith's thoughts often wandered to the home where she had passed those peaceful days, when, ignorant of her father's misfortunes, she yielded to the sweet influences around her, and felt the beauty of a home undisturbed by shadows of evil. And if her mind dwelt longest upon one member of that dear circle, upon him to whom she owed her life, it was with a melancholy, though tender feeling that thenceforth their paths through life must diverge widely. A sigh of regret at this reflection would escape from her bosom, which, if she did not seek to smother, spoke to her only of a sweet lingering shade of sadness over a picture which might else have glowed with the warmth and light of summer. She was unconscious of a hope which lay beneath the ashes of the past, ready to ignite at the first breath of encouragement, for the cloud that rested upon her future hid from her all that was bright and cheering, and forbade her indulging in the dear though sometimes delusive visions of youth's fair season.

She never alluded now to her long-cherished wish that her father would at last be persuaded to return to England. In truth that step which once seemed to her so desirable, had lost its whole attraction, and her heart was bound to those foreign and inhospitable

shores by a mysterious tie. Sometimes she vaguely wondered at this change of feeling ; and then the remembrance of her father's feeble condition coming over her, she looked no further for its solution, and resigned herself, without reluctance, to the necessity of remaining in their present home.

The melancholy winds of autumn were fast scattering the remaining vestiges of summer, and the drear and gloomy forest mourned over its faded glory. The strength of the invalid failed with the year's vanishing brightness, and he was now unable to leave his chamber. Edith rarely left him, unless upon an errand of his devising, that she might obtain needful air and exercise, rather than as he would have persuaded her, for his convenience or accommodation ; and at such times Maretah was his kind and attentive companion.

CHAPTER XX.

ONE morning the young girl, absorbed in her own sad thoughts, passed thus on her unobtrusive way, when she was suddenly aroused from her reverie by the sound of a drum, and the rush of an approaching throng. Edith looked about her for some way of escape from such an encounter, but seeing none, and unable to extricate herself from the crowd, which by this time surrounded her, she was borne along by its impetuous tide. There were no loud acclamations from the multitude, betokening joy or triumph, but a murmur, like the rush of an approaching storm, denoted that some mightier power was stirring its deeper passions.

Men gazed upon each other with faces pale by fear, and shook their heads with dark foreboding, and women drew their children into a closer and firmer grasp, and hushed the wailing infants in their arms. Even the very little ones seemed to have caught the general panic, for their shouts of mirth, and even of terror, were silenced as their wondering eyes sought the paternal countenance.

It was not long ere Edith found herself standing in view of a scene which struck terror into her very soul. Directly in front of her arose a scaffold, and approaching it advanced a procession, consisting of about two hundred armed men, beside horsemen, in the midst of whom walked hand-in-hand three individuals, whom she recognized as belonging to her father's persuasion, and whom she had frequently seen at their private religious assemblies. It did not directly occur to the astonished girl that these could be the destined victims of a fate so terrible, for while every countenance around them was either pale with fear or horror, or distorted by angry passions, theirs alone were calm and tranquil, indicating that their spirits were already lifted above the scenes of earth, and transported to a resting-place of peace and joy.

As Edith gazed upon them the calm that was diffused over their faces and attitude seemed to impart itself in a measure to her own agitated mind. She saw them—two young men on either side of a female advanced in years, hand in hand ascend the steps of the platform, followed by their stern and scowling foes—as it might be the Divine impersonation of Religion leading to the altar of her sacrifice the victims of dark-browed Superstition. She saw that several attempts on their part to speak to the crowd were rudely prevented; and it was not until the executioner advanced to bind them, that a realizing sense of the scene before

her struck like death upon her brain. Then with a shriek she turned to fly, and the people around her, noticing for the first time the peculiarity of her dress and supposing her to be a relative or dear friend of one of the prisoners, humanely made for her a way of egress. One or two of the soldiers who mingled among the crowd to preserve order made a movement to arrest her progress, but their path was cut off by the people, and one man, braver than the rest, with a threatening frown reminded them that there was already blood enough to be shed. In an instant a hundred voices joined in the dissatisfied chorus, and warned the armed officials that their act was not in accordance with the united will of the people.

Meanwhile preparations for the execution were going on, and the foremost of the two male prisoners ascended the ladder. The rope was adjusted about his neck, and in a loud voice he cried—"I suffer for Christ, in whom I live and for whom I die." In another moment his body hung suspended in the air and his spirit stood before his God in sorrowful accusing of his murderers.

His friend then stepping up the ladder, exclaimed. "Be it known unto all, this day, that we suffer not as evil-doers, but for conscience' sake. This day shall we be at rest with the Lord!" and he, too, had received the martyrs' crown.

Then Mary Dyer, whose presence of mind had not

forsaken her through all this trying scene, stopped up the ladder, ready to share the fate of her companions. Her feet were bound, the halter placed about her neck, and a handkerchief being desired by the hangman to cover her face, one was handed him by a divine, who stood by in all the delegated majesty of a servant of the Lord. But now a cry is heard from the outskirts of the throng, and echoed by glad voices far and near, "Stop, stop; she is reprieved!" *

That night there was scarce an individual in Boston whose rest was not disturbed by the events of that fearful day. Children started from their dreams—which should be only of innocent delights—to cling, with screams of terror, to their parents' protecting arms. And parents themselves, so far from reproving their fears as groundless, trembled as they tried to soothe their excited fancy.

So far from being a popular measure, the execution of the Quakers aroused the censure and indignation of many, and from that day friends began to arise and declare themselves fearlessly in behalf of the persecuted sect, and from many quarters loud and earnest remonstrances were made against the severity of such proceedings.

* Mary Dyer was at this time reprieved and banished from Boston, but on returning the following year to bear her testimony against the cruelties exercised toward her brethren, she was condemned, and executed on the 1st day of April, 1660.

It was a dark day for New England, when her virgin soil was doomed to blush forever with the blood thus shed by her adopted sons. The Genius of history, with a glow of triumph on her cheek, had hitherto recorded the noble deeds of the Patriot Pilgrims; but now, with the stain of shame mounting to her brow, she turns her truth-telling face from futurity, and with the tender hand of a mother, strives to hide the record of her children's sin!

CHAPTER XXI.

EDITH swiftly fled from that scene of terror, scarce conscious where her frightened footsteps led her. On and on she hurried, as if distance could erase that fearful picture from her mind. Unwilling to present herself before her father, in her present excited condition, she avoided her own home, and took the path that led her to the water's side, and when exhausted by fatigue and emotion, she slackened her pace and ventured to cast a hurried glance behind; she saw that she had been followed by an individual who was endeavoring by earnest gestures to arrest her attention. Deeming that perhaps in that solitary spot she had more to fear from such an encounter than from the uncertain impulses of a crowd, and not being in a state to reflect upon her course, she once more turned and hurried on her way, with accelerated speed. But her pursuer was soon at her side, and seized her arm, just as she reached the water's edge.

"Edith, Edith, what mean you, and why do you come here in this wild haste?" he exclaimed, with a face and manner full of apprehension and distrust.

She turned and saw that it was her friend, and

former deliverer, Louis Hermon, but it was some time before she could recover her composure, sufficiently to answer him.

"Alas, what have I seen! Oh, they will not, they dare not do a deed so fearful!"

"Is it possible that you have been a witness of what is transpiring yonder? You should not have come abroad on such a day."

"I knew nothing of it, indeed, until I found myself in the midst of a crowd, and in fearful vicinity to the scene. "Oh," she cried, clasping her hands eagerly, and starting forward, "perhaps it is not yet too late to prevent a crime so deadly."

"Stop, Edith, you can do nothing. It is, indeed, a crime displeasing to God and man, but nothing can avail now. Let me lead you home before the crowd disperses, and every path and by way becomes alive with loiterers."

"I will go, but thou must not come with me. God alone is our defense now, and He—but no, it can not be that He ever deserts his children."

"I can not permit you to go alone. It is unsafe, and beside, I have something to say to you which concerns your father's welfare."

"I beg that thou will say it, then, in as few words as possible, and leave me. I have no fear in going my way alone; and with thanks for thy kindness, must request that I may be allowed to do so."

"You are offended, Edith, and not without cause. My late conduct requires an explanation, and I will give it with candor sufficient to satisfy even you. I saw you running in such haste as led me to fear that some danger pursued you, and I followed to defend you at all hazards. But when you ran so wildly down this path, knowing its termination, a more terrible thought crossed my mind, and filled it with a momentary distrust of one whom I believed to be the soul of rectitude. Pardon me, Edith, for that moment I feared you meditated an act from which I now feel your soul would shrink—the act of self-destruction. It was this that for an instant caused my manner toward you to become constrained."

Edith turned her dark eyes on him with a smile, in which mingled so much of wounded feeling, that Louis almost repented his candor. "Didst thou indeed suspect me, even for a moment, of entertaining such a purpose? Couldst thou believe me so lost to every feeling of duty, every restraint of conscience?"

At this moment the cries which announced that Mary Dyer was reprieved, were borne upon the air from the distance, and ignorant of their real cause, each supposed them to be the expression of inhuman joy from the crowd, upon witnessing the last act of that day's tragedy. With a shudder they quickened their steps, and drawing Edith's trembling hand within his own, Louis led her by the most secluded way

toward her home. Wishing to divert her thoughts from this agitating topic, he spoke of her father and inquired into his condition.

"This is a fortunate encounter, for it gives me the opportunity of consulting with you upon a plan I have been forming. Most gladly would I do all in my power to contribute to his recovery, or to alleviate his sufferings. Think you he will trust himself in the hands of such a poor adviser?"

Much had occurred in the short experience of poor Edith to deprive her of the elasticity of mind natural to her years and character, yet there was enough of buoyancy left to lift her spirit on the wing of a bright hope which these words conjured. "Was it not possible that medical aid might yet reach the root of his malady?" Oh! how beautiful was the thought that darted across her mind, of that dear parent restored to life and health once more! In an instant the sunshine of happiness broke from the clouds behind which it had long been hidden, and illumed the vision of the future with its joyous rays.

"Oh!" she cried, "who can tell that it may not yet be? For my sake he must, he will! and yet—" and the shadow once more fell upon her spirit as she remembered the danger in which such a step would involve her friend—"no, no; I see it can not be! What right have we to risk thy safety thus? My father will not consent, and I dare not urge it!"

"But indeed you may, for I have been so bold as to obtain permission to become your father's physician. Edith, it was a duty I owed to them whose only protector I am. Through Mr. Mildman's intercession it was accomplished, and so, in lieu of better and more skillful aid, you must, for aught I see, accept mine. I will not intrude now, however, lest your father, unconscious of my dignity, should slight my newly-born honors."

As the young physician turned to retrace his steps, his thoughts still lingered around the dwelling of the Quaker. Doubtless they would have been less pleasant had he known that envious hatred had pursued him thither. Too often it is the case, that the treacherous spider weaves his net within the bower where peace and joy might reign; but although for a brief time falsehood may prevail, truth—unswerving and unerring—will at last assert her power, and maintain the "even tenor of her way."

It required some little persuasion on the part of Edith to induce her father to accept the services of a medical attendant, for he was well persuaded that his disease was one that defied all human skill, yet for her sake he at length consented that it should be so, and Louis now became a daily visitor at their domicile.

But although his remedies afforded a temporary relief to the sufferer, they effected no permanent change, and he, too, was soon convinced that his patient's case

lay beyond all help, save from the hand of the Great Physician. Still, it was a comfort to the lonely girl to feel that she had his deepest sympathy, and his kind attentions to her dying parent awoke her liveliest gratitude.

And no one told her that he was dying, for they saw by the subdued calmness of her air, by her growing pallor, and her patient watchfulness, that she already knew it but too well. And how many an agonizing thought struggled within her bosom as she saw that parent's tender, pitying gaze follow her about the chamber, or sometimes turn away from her as if the sight were more than he could endure. Then she strove to wear a cheerful look, or to hide her starting tears, until, in the silence of her chamber, and alone with God, she could pour out the bitterness of her sorrow. There she sought and found strength to bear her through each wearying day—wearying, though every moment as it wore away seemed like a vanished treasure. Yes! she knew that she should soon be an orphan—perhaps friendless and outcast in a world of strangers. And what sustained her under the pressure of this knowledge? Ah! what, indeed, but her unfaltering trust in God!

CHAPTER XXII.

THE visits of the young physician afforded Edith an additional pleasure, because they gave her an opportunity of hearing from his family, and through him she often received from Angeline a token of remembrance in the shape of a trifle of needlework, wrought by her own delicate hand, or an eloquent, though more simple one of a single fragrant flower; and these affectionate gifts she returned by others of a similar character. Occasionally Maretah's forest skill contributed to the child's precious hoard, though nothing gave her so much pleasure as a sketch from the ready pencil of her friend. These it was her delight to try to imitate, and she would sit for hours together laboring to produce something resembling the valued original. One day when she was thus employed, and thoroughly intent upon her occupation, her mother softly crept behind her, intending, unobserved, to watch her progress. She was engaged in attempting to copy a female head, of singular and touching beauty, which appeared to be a creation of the fancy. But as soon as Mrs. Hermon fixed her eyes upon it, she ut-

tered an exclamation of surprise, and seizing the paper, remained for some moments lost in its contemplation.

"Dear mamma, how you startled me! What makes you look so surprised and so sorry?"

"Angeline, how did you come by this?" asked her mother, her eyes still fixed upon the picture, and her face expressing not a little emotion.

"'Tis one that Edith sent me. I thought I had shown it you before."

"It is a singular resemblance, but more sad in the expression"—and going to a drawer she took from it a miniature which she compared with the sketch in her hand. It was the picture of a bright and laughing girl, and few would have detected any resemblance between it and the mature beauty of the other, tempered by matron gravity, and a spiritual sadness which looked from the depths of those eyes subdued by sorrow.

"Not so much like her, after all. Strange, that I should have thought so! I now see what memory of the past it was that haunted me whenever I looked at Edith, for there certainly is a resemblance to her here. Dear Margaret! would I knew whether, after all, her lot proved a happy one."

* * * * *

The winter was passing away, and Louis was almost the only visitor at the cottage, though Mr. Mildman sometimes came to inquire into their progress and to

endeavor with Christian-like zeal to turn the heart of the dying man to what he deemed the true and only way to perfect peace, when one day just as Edith had retired for a short repose from the duties of the sick-room, she was both surprised and disappointed at seeing Henriette unexpectedly enter her chamber.

"Why, Edith, how are you? I am so glad to find you at last, and what work I have had to do it! I see you are delighted to see me—nay, do not trouble your conscience (which I know is very tender) by making useless protestations! Bless me! who would imagine you had such a luxurious corner here all to yourself. Ah, ha! Edith, a pretty martyr you are, truly! By the way, did you go to the Quaker dance the other day? I thought possibly you and your father would be invited. Indeed, it was quite a slight to omit asking you!"

"Thou hast had a cold walk, Henriette," was Edith's only answer; though her heart sank at the thought of being subjected to the persecutions of this bitter-spirited girl.

"Yes, it *is* cold; but you have such a nice little fire here that I shall make myself comfortable. Indeed, now that I have found you, you may expect to see me often. Then you have all these pretty trifles about your chamber to amuse one with, books, paintings, and embroidery. The music, I suppose you keep to charm my simple cousin with when your father is

away. And pray, which is his patient, Edith, you or your father? for I fancy his illness is somewhat fabulous, after all. But really, Edith, it is laughable to see your dismay. Now, if my dear aunt (who would not run the risk for the world) were to come to see you, I warrant you would not look so. But I am the only one who is willing to defy the lash for the sake of keeping up your acquaintance, and yet you look as much like a victim as if you were suffering the penalty of the law and sitting in the stocks;" and Henriette laughed immoderately.

"Henriette, I have no desire—indeed, more than that, I do insist that thou wilt not expose thyself and thy kind aunt's family by coming hither. I will be entirely candid with thee and say that no good can come of it, for I am sure that it is not for love of me thou seekest our home!"

"That is true, Edith; it is purely for amusement! You may rest assured, however, that I shall come whenever the humor takes me. I like to watch the progress of a love affair, and this between yourself and my cousin is quite a little romance. I am curious to see what device you will try next in case this of a sick father should fail. You have tried drowning yourself, you know, and that came very near succeeding."

"Henriette, thou art an orphan, and I shall soon be the same. My lot is one of grief and hardship. My cup of bitterness well nigh o'erflows the brim. Why

shouldst thou wish to mingle in it more of pain and sorrow than that with which God visits me?"

"Why how ungrateful you are, Edith! What is your lot in comparison with mine? An orphan! Who cares for that? But look at me! behold the bent form with which I am cursed! What, think you, would I care for grief and hardship if I had your form and beauty, which could win all hearts to love me? Why was I sent on earth in this shape? Was it to be kind and gentle and patient—was it to beg for the affection which beauty can command or disdain at pleasure? I am an object of hatred and loathing. No child sees me but turns to look again and stand in wonder; and no mother beholds me but blesses God that her child was not born like me! And yet I should be meek and humble, and thank heaven for my existence. No! I will not. I will give hate for hate, and those who can not love shall fear me; they shall feel the sting of my revenge!"

"Thou doest thyself injustice, Henriette. What is the most beautiful form if a corresponding spirit do not inhabit it? Does not a violent and undisciplined mind distort the most symmetrical shape, and render beauty but a mockery? And will not a kind and gentle spirit clothe the homeliest in more than earthly beauty? None are placed here but in kindness and mercy, and affection ever yields to affection its grateful tribute."

"It is false!" cried Henriette, starting from her seat, while her face was livid with anger. "Love is not the return for love, but hatred often stings the heart that should receive its meed of affection. How dare you tell me this! Is it to taunt me with a coldness of which you are the cause? Proud girl, you shall yet know what I suffer. You shall feel the pangs of disappointed hope. You shall suffer the agony of a heart despised and trampled on. Do not flatter yourself that you shall ever realize the happiness you dream of. And now I leave you to your reflections, but be sure you shall see me again. Oh, yes!" she continued, with a taunting laugh, for by this time she had recovered her composure, "I shall come again, never fear—and now we understand each other."

Just then she turned to go, and Maretah entering the room at the moment, each stood for a short time regarding the other with looks of astonishment, and, as if mutually recognizing an enemy, their expression changed to one of proud defiance, until at last Henriette brushed passed the Indian girl and vanished from the chamber.

The latter approached the bed-side, and gazed anxiously upon Edith's pallid countenance, for, although she retained her composure of manner, her face wore so harassed an expression, that the kind-hearted girl knelt beside her, and drawing her head toward her until it rested upon her bosom, commenced in a low

and soothing voice to murmur a wild lullaby. For awhile Edith's tears continued to fall silently, but gradually she yielded to its influence, and, wearied with the excess of her emotions, slept on the friendly bosom of the forest child. Tenderly, as if she were an infant, Maretah watched her slumbers, and when Edith awoke, she found herself still cradled in her arms, and those soft dark eyes smilingly bent upon her.

CHAPTER XXIII.

It was not without anxiety that Mrs. Hermon had consented to her son's plan of becoming John Morrison's medical adviser. Yet she felt it would be almost inhuman to withhold such assistance from him, and the sanction of the Council being obtained through the intercession of Mr. Mildman, her fears were quite allayed. Then, too, her mind was prepossessed with the idea that the minister was Edith's accepted suitor, otherwise she might have apprehended for her son another danger in coming so frequently into contact with one, who, she believed, possessed every high womanly quality, and to whom she herself could not forbear rendering the just tribute of respect and admiration.

They had heard, through Mr. Mildman, the circumstances of her solitary interview with the Governor, and also his account of her father's conduct and her own when summoned to appear before the Council, and had felt their regard deepen and their esteem increase for one who thus unobtrusively displayed such heroic courage.

One day, however, Mrs. Hermon's confidence in the

Quaker's daughter received a check, in consequence of the following letter, which was placed in her hand by an unknown messenger.

“DEAR MADAM:

“Forgive this interference in your family concerns of one who has your welfare deeply at heart. But aware of a danger which threatens you, and of which I am sure you must be ignorant. I should not be performing the part of a friend did I not seek to warn you of your peril. You have cherished in your home and near your too tender heart, one in whom you are deceived most strangely. Fear not because your secret is known to me, for by me it is regarded as sacred. In your conduct you obeyed the dictates of humanity, for which I am the last to condemn you. But I can not see your confidence betrayed—your kindness turned against your own peace. Beware lest fruitless self-sacrifice and misplaced sympathy involve you in unhappiness—perhaps in ruin. Withdraw your son from the dangerous intercourse of treachery and design. Save him, while it is yet in your power. The arts and devices of woman are beyond compare. It is necessary that you should be guarded in your means. Do not yet seek to convince him that his confidence is misplaced. And, above all, keep all knowledge of this communication from him—at least for the present. When your object is obtained you may reveal all, but,

unless you would defeat your own purpose, keep this secret now. At least obtain his confidence first, and you will find that I am right, and that you have deceived yourself. May God help you, is the sincere prayer of
YOUR FRIEND."

Mrs. Hermon was not one to be easily alarmed by an anonymous communication, and yet, as she read and re-read the above, she felt her mind awake to all the fond alarms it was calculated to produce. There was but one application she could make of its meaning, and although she was reluctant to believe that she had been so entirely deceived in the character of the Quaker's daughter, appealing as this did to her maternal instinct, it caused her much uneasiness and some vexation.

It is no less strange than true, and not greatly to the credit of humanity, that while virtue must labor long and diligently to win our esteem, a single breath of slander is too often enough to overthrow those fruits of patient toil. The gossamer web of opinion is destroyed by the besom of suspicion, wielded by a careless or designing hand. Only strike the chord of self, and in a moment its response drowns the claims of timid and low-voiced merit.

It was a difficult matter for Mrs. Hermon to determine how she should proceed to bring about the result she desired, of ascertaining if her son's feelings had already become seriously interested in the young girl,

and if so, how to convince him of his error, and to prevent its fatal consequences. She resolved to follow the advice of her secret informer in concealing the fact of the letter having been received, and to make her anxiety appear as the result of mature reflection; and she consoled herself with the conviction that at all events she should be able to obtain his promise of forbearing to enter into any marriage-engagement without her sanction.

The troubled expression of her countenance throughout the day did not escape his observation, and when, as was their custom, they sat together, after the other members of the family had retired, to enjoy a few moments of mutual confidence and undisturbed intercourse, he tenderly inquired into the cause of her anxiety.

"My son, I fear that for once we have both been strangely imprudent, and that I especially am to blame for want of reflection and foresight."

"It would be strange indeed if my mother had been wanting in either of these—her especial attributes. But why do you speak and look so anxiously?"

"Oh! Louis, it is on your account; and could I only be certain that you have not already fallen into the snare, I should once more breathe freely."

"Why, mother, what can you mean? A snare? Only show me the rash fowler who is trying to catch your unwary boy!"

"My dear, I must beg you will be serious. It is too important a matter to be made a jest of!"

"Well, mother, I will be serious, then, although I am sure your maternal fears are aroused needlessly."

"God grant they are! But we are often on the very brink of the precipice before we dream that there is one in our way."

"But why this apprehension? I beg you to tell me in plain words, what it is you fear, and what danger you imagine besets me?"

"In plain words, then, Louis, I fear that our sympathy for these unfortunate Quakers has blinded us as to the possible consequences."

"But how can that be, when you know that what I am now doing is by consent of the Council? Besides, our humane friend, Mr. Mildman, was so guarded on our account, that he took upon himself the task of selecting a physician for Mr. Morrison, without letting our good counselors know that I offered my poor services."

"Oh, yes, I know all that, but it does not in the least obviate the difficulty. It is a danger of a more insidious character, and one from which neither I nor the council can secure you. It rests with yourself only, my son!"

"You are more mysterious than ever!" he exclaimed, while something of a flush passed over his face at the remark.

The sign of emotion did not pass undetected by the watchful mother, and a start of pain crossed her heart as she beheld it.

"Oh! Louis, think in what misery an unfortunate attachment of this nature would involve us!"

"Mother!" he cried, as he started from his seat, and with strong marks of agitation paced the apartment—"mother, be assured you shall never be involved in misery through my means!"

"Oh! my son, sit down again beside me, and say that this warning has not come too late—that my apprehensions are groundless. Say that your heart is untouched by an unhappy passion—that your affections are yet free! Tell me that my boy is not the victim of these cruel circumstances!"

"Mother," he answered, resuming his seat, and taking her hand in both his own, while his face grew so pale as to cause her inexpressible alarm, "you have taken me by surprise; you do not give me time to think, to know my own feelings. How is it, think you? Can one who calls himself a man steel his heart against what is most pure and beautiful? Could you imagine that a young and susceptible boy, like me," and he strove to smile gayly as he said this, "could behold such loveliness in distress, could see with what noble heroism and angelic patience that frail girl has borne the adversities of her lot—think you I could note her daily self-sacrifice, suffered without a murmur or com-

plaint; her courage in submitting to insult and cruel threats rather than betray us to suspicion (and mark you, mother, we should never have known a breath of it from her!)—do you imagine I could see all this with indifference and deny the just tribute of admiration? It is more than you yourself could resist, and what is it you expect of me?"

"Alas, alas! I see it is too true! Why was I so deceived, so blinded? What is a mother's instinct if it did not warn me of this? I have been too secure, too proud in my happiness—and behold my punishment!"

"Mother, mother!" cried he, as he threw his arms fondly around her, "do not let it grieve you so! What is it you desire of me that is not my duty, nay, my pleasure to yield? Your happiness is far dearer to me than mine own. Ask what you will, mother, only do not let me see you shed tears, and feel that I am the cause of your distress!"

"It is for your sake, I grieved, and I can never forgive my own folly in not thinking to warn you of this, from the first."

"And, on the other hand, I will not forgive you if you continue to reproach yourself thus. In doing so, you are really unkind. How could you be expected to foresee it? and indeed if you had, mother, it might only have put the mischief into my mind all the sooner, instead of preventing it."

"And now, what can I do to banish it? If I could

only aid you, by any sacrifice of my own feelings, in attaining the necessary result, I should indeed rejoice!"

"What necessary result do you speak of, mother?"

"Oh, Louis, is it possible you do not understand me, or is it because you will not, that you speak so?"

"I believe I understand what you mean, but *why* you should mean it, is not so clear. Why is it necessary, my dear mother, that I should banish this idea (which I confess is so attractive, that it would be no easy task to do so) from my mind?"

"For your own peace and happiness, in the first place; and in the second, for that of your unworthy mother."

"Say for your own first; though God forbid it should be so. Why should my interest in one of the worthiest of her sex, result in unhappiness to either?"

"Your imagination deceives you, my son. Perhaps when you have calmly watched the developments of her character, the task will become less difficult."

"What change is this, mother? It was only yesterday you praised and admired her, and now—mother! you would not—no, I wrong you by the thought—descend to other than fair and open means to bring about your desires! But you did not mean to breathe a suspicion against her. I was too hasty—forgive me for my rash zeal, I beg you!"

"Much as it pains me to do so, Louis, and much as

it may grieve you to hear it, it is my duty to say, that public condemnation of an attachment to one of this sect is not the chief objection in my mind. It would weigh more with me to know that you had bestowed your pure and generous affection on an object unworthy your high regard."

"You surprise me beyond expression, mother, and yet what you say is a relief to my mind, because I am now sure that *you* are the victim of a delusion, and I only ask for time to convince you of your error."

"Time! time for you to become more and more deeply involved in this unhappy affair. Time for her to complete the design she has undertaken!"

"Now, indeed, for the first time in my life, I must believe my mother to be unjust! Who has poisoned your mind thus? for some one I am sure has been secretly working upon your feelings. But beware, lest by such means you increase the cause of your grief. Your son is but human, and injustice may drive me to the extreme you most fear!"

"Is it my son who speaks to me thus? Behold the fruits of this new influence already! Can that be for good which divides the hearts of parent and child, and sows dissension where all before was love and harmony?"

"It shall not be so, mother. Did I not say that no grief should come to you through my means? Hear now what I have to promise you before God, who wit-

nesses my sincerity: I love the Quakers' daughter, and yet until your hand shall place in mine that gift which I count the greatest that this world can have in store for me, I will not seek to obtain it. And believe me when I add, that I am happier thus bound to you than if bound by other and not more solemn vows to her—wanting your approbation to complete my happiness! Does this satisfy you?"

"It does, my dear, my noble boy, and God reward you for it! But I thought there was something between the minister and this unfortunate girl. Did not you, too, fancy so? or have you indeed too much reason to know that there is no such obstacle in the way of a return of your affection?"

"Mother, do you think I would deceive you thus? I have been as it were, in a dream, and you aroused me to the reality. It was only when asked to relinquish this thought, that I became aware how deeply it was fixed in my heart."

"Thank heaven for this! for if you were ignorant of it until now, it can not be so deeply implanted in your heart, as your words led me to fear. And time, I trust, will soon heal this first wound, especially if it should convince you—"

"Mother," he interrupted, with an expression of pain upon his handsome countenance, "I have something to ask of you in return for the promise given. It is that you will forbear to wound me by expressing

doubts unworthy both yourself and the woman whom I admire and love. Let me be candid with you, you shall understand me now, at least. I have not pledged myself to try to crush the new feelings that spring up in my heart, for in doing so, I should promise to subdue all that is generous and manly, and that I feel elevates me by its influence. But I am content to wait until circumstances shall become more favorable to my wishes, and Edith's integrity triumphs—as I am sure it will—over your sudden prejudice. And when you are prepared to crown my happiness, by taking her to your heart, I shall owe you another obligation, in addition to those you have been heaping upon me all my life.”

“I accede to your request, my son. You shall hear no remarks from me, calculated to give you pain ; but there is one thing more. You will not, under this change of circumstances, continue your visits there ? Mr. Mildman can readily procure other, and perhaps, more experienced counsel.”

“Ask no more of me, mother. I can not and will not consent to desert this dying man. Have no fears for me. I am not so weak as to forget the duty I owe you, in performing that I owe to humanity. Good-night, dearest and best of mothers. I need not say, remember your unworthy son in your secret prayers.”

“Good-night, dearest and best of sons, never will I stand in the way of your real happiness, believe me !”

After Mrs. Hermon retired to her chamber, Louis

remained for some time lost in reflection. So surprised was he at the sudden discovery of his feelings that it was long before he could think coherently upon his future course and dreary prospects, and the more deeply he did consider them the more formidable each obstacle became, until like lovers in general, he thought himself of all men the most miserable.

It was not that he regretted the promise made his mother, for he felt that to be a duty he owed her; nor would he be willing to involve her in the consequences of a rash union with this proscribed people. Neither did the sudden prejudice which seemed to have taken possession of her mind occasion him serious anxiety, for he was too confident that this would give way before the steadfast virtue in which he trusted, long ere the other obstacle would be overcome.

But it was a source of bitter pain to him to feel that at the very time when the friendless girl might most require an arm to defend her and a voice to speak in her behalf, his arm and his voice must both refuse to aid her; and how could he with honor, remain silent and inactive, beholding her he loved exposed to dangers, perhaps to cruel persecutions?

It was some relief to his generous nature that he could recall no sign on her part of more than a grateful recognition of his kindness—no betrayal of a stronger feeling—no conscious blush when her glance met his own—no timid shrinking from his eye as if

there were aught within her heart she would conceal therefrom. *She* he hoped, was saved the pain he must suffer. And yet a vague disappointment mingled with his sense of relief. It would be a consolation to know that at least she understood him and was not ungrateful for his love. Then he remembered how carefully he must guard his conduct to prevent his sentiments being discerned by her, and tried to feel glad for her sake that his secret was untold.

Poor Louis! how hard he struggled to resist the tempting visions of happiness that floated through his brain. "No, no," he cried; "I must not yield to the charms of imagination—I will not give myself up to its sweet delusions! No, my mother, I will be true to my promise; yet is it not strange that one who has experienced such deep affection as she cherished for my father, should so soon appear to forget its strength? And to believe that because I was ignorant of it until now, I shall forget it the sooner! Ah, *she* forgets how the insidious disease becomes so firmly rooted ere its presence is developed, that it can seldom be removed. Well, let her deceive herself so. She shall never know how much I suffer. If the happiness of either is to be sacrificed, let it be mine, for Fate has already spent its fury upon her; and be it my task now to guard her against further pain and suffering!"

Mrs. Hermon's feelings were of a different character from those which agitated her son. But although his

promise relieved her mind of its chief source of anxiety, it distressed her to know that he still cherished the hope of being one day united to the young Quakeress. Yet, feeling that he would do nothing rashly, she persuaded herself that time would wear away all traces of his present fancy; and that after awhile he would voluntarily abandon all thought of such a connection, even if he did not become convinced of the unworthiness of her to whom he was attached.

She wondered who the unknown friend could be from whom the letter came, and could think of no one among her acquaintance who took such an extraordinary interest in their affairs. Suddenly it dawned upon her that possibly it was the minister himself; and that perhaps it was dictated less by disinterested kindness than by the jealous fear of rivalry. It must be confessed that this conjecture did not add to the good lady's satisfaction, for she began to feel some compunction for having yielded too readily to suspicions of one in whose conduct she was obliged to confess to herself she had never witnessed any thing in the least inconsistent with maidenly dignity and propriety. Yet for all that the letter appeared to be dictated by sincere motives; and there might very probably be those who knew Edith's real character much better than she, and who detected under a winning disguise the arts and practices of an accomplished deceiver.

CHAPTER XXIV.

It was a long time since Edith had seen the once gay and sprightly Alice; but amid all the grief and sadness that overhung her home, she often cast an anxious thought upon her friend, and cherished a deep and abiding interest in her happiness. One dreary evening as she sat reflecting upon this very theme, the light foot of Alice ascended the stairs, and ere Edith was aware of her presence, her arms were thrown about her, and those blue eyes looking fondly up into her own. But the first flash of delight at seeing her again was checked by a second look at her once rosy and laughing face, for she was pale and wasted as if disease had marked her for its own. Edith was so painfully surprised that for a moment she forgot to speak a single word of welcome, but sat gazing upon the fair girl who knelt before her, with a look of dismay.

"What, dearest, not one word of pleasure at again beholding me? I thought thou wouldst at least have greeted me with a smile of welcome!"

"Alice, dear girl, I forgot myself. I am indeed rejoiced to see thee once more, but," taking another

look at her, she burst into tears and hid her face on the shoulder of her friend.

"Why, what aileth thee, Edith? No ill has befallen thee, I trust. Has aught happened to thy father or to thee to distress thee thus? Speak, Edith, for thy tears do much alarm me!"

"Nothing has happened, but thou didst come so suddenly, and I believe I am grown somewhat childish of late. Forgive me, and sit here close beside me—yes, lean upon me, dear one, for thou lookest weary."

"Edith, I do believe that thou hast grown to be the weakest of us too, and I must tutor thee! Thou gavest me a sad reception, and that, too, when I came on a brave errand!"

"Think no more of it, darling, but come, tell me thy errand now, and thou shalt not again complain of weakness."

"Canst thou guess nothing? Wilt thou be so cruel as to force me to explain? Do I not look like a gay and happy bride?"

Edith only gazed upon her in silent consternation.

"There, now! thou saidst I should have no cause to complain of thee again. And yet thou only starest at me so when I came to bid thee to my bridal!"

"Alice!"

"And is that all? Hast thou no words of joy for me, and I am to be wedded to-morrow? Is it only 'Alice!'"

"Thou art jesting with me. Is this kind?"

"Jesting! Edith, do I look like jesting?" She asked so solemnly that a shudder ran over Edith's frame.

"No," she continued, "I do not think thou hast reason to accuse me of that. To-morrow is to be my bridal morn, and I am here to bid thee come!"

"Oh, Alice! art thou resolved then, and can nothing save thee? Surely thou wilt not go before the sacred altar, and bestow thy hand where thou hast no heart to give! Forgive me, my sister, my best and dearest friend, but I can not in silence see thee make the sacrifice!"

"Sacrifice! Yes, the victim is already bound to the horns of the altar. But what am I saying? Thou hast disturbed me, Edith. I charge thee, speak not another word against it. To-morrow I go, and nothing, no, nothing must prevent me."

"But, Alice, ere thou goest, tell thy father all. Oh! tell him, I conjure thee, and let him save thee from this cruel doom."

"Tell *him*? Didst thou never read in the Holy Word how Abraham was about to offer up his son, his only child?"

"Ah, yes, indeed I have, and God prevented him!"

"But there is no poor lamb now to take my place! No; the child was sinless and pure, and what am I? Edith, do I look as if there were blood here? Wear I the aspect of a murderer?"

Her eyes were so wild, and her words seemed so strange as she said this, at the same time spreading out her transparent hands, and looking at them in such terror, as if she almost expected to behold the guilty stain upon them, that Edith, in affright, threw her arms around her, and began to utter soothing words, though scarcely knowing what she said.

"Do not fear. I am not distraught. But, Edith," she said, lowering her voice to a whisper, "He is dead—dead—and I, who loved him more by far than I did my own poor life, yes *I* am the murderess! But, ah me, how I frighten thee—do not tremble so—he forgives me! I know he does indeed, for last night he came to my bed-side, and gazed so tenderly upon me, and said, 'Alice, I forgive thee; it is better to die than to live as thou livest, for thy sufferings are fearful. But do not forget me, and when thou art a wedded bride, sometimes think of him who had thy first affection.' And then he stooped until his lips touched my cheek. They were cold—cold as marble. I have not been warm since, Edith, and yet their touch left a burning spot, look here; and it burns and burns into my heart, and seems to be drinking my life's blood! But do not hold me so! Thou thinkest I am crazed, but I am not. I knew it was only a dream—but, oh! what a dream!"

"Alice, thou art not well; thou must not be wedded on the morrow. Defer it a little—do, dearest, for my

sake. Surely he will not urge thee. Only wait a short time until thou art better. Thou must not—indeed thou must not,” she said earnestly, for she was so agitated, fearing for her poor friend’s reason, that she scarcely knew what to say.

“Oh! yes, but I must. And thou shalt come to the church—say thou wilt. Every one will be gay and happy, the bells will ring merrily, and all shall say I am a fair bride. Yes, Edith, I shall be calm and composed when it is over; it will be better for me, too. But I must have thee there—say thou wilt not refuse me this. I have set my heart upon it, and thou must not disappoint me.”

“It is thy unalterable resolve, then?”

“It is; and, my friend, believe me when I say, that it is for the best. Yes, Edith, Edward is dead, and all I can do now, is to try to perform a wife’s duty, and to forget the past in laboring to make the future happy for him who is to be my husband. Forget what I have said to thee so wildly. I have no friend but thee to confide in, and I was selfish to distress thee with my folly. But promise me to come to-morrow, for I shall have no bride’s-maid but thyself”

“Alice, I will do so if it is any joy to thee. But I must be where none will notice me, for thy sake.”

“Thanks, dear one. I knew thou wouldst not refuse me; and thou must stand beside the south pillar

nearest the altar, where I shall look for thee when I come in, and mind I see thee there!"

"I will be there, darling, and will pray God to give thee happiness."

"Nay, that is more than my portion. Yet pray for me, I need the petitions of some such saint-like souls. But ere I go, I have a word for thee. Never love, guard thy heart and give its wealth to none. These may be the only words of truth and wisdom thou ever hadst from the lips of thy Alice, and mark them. Keep thy heart within thine own bosom, and never let it thence, or thou wilt be wretched. And now, farewell, but stay—if thou needest a friend, I know of one who is pledged to serve thee; it is my father, and he would have come here long ago, but he—that is, Mr. Mildman—thought it needless."

"I know, Alice, and we thank him. And dost thou remember the evening when we two mourned over their cruelty, and prayed that God would turn their hearts to mercy?"

"I do. I have thought of it often; and it is my chief consolation to know that my father is changed in this respect. Oh! I have not lived all in vain, after all!"

"And let it show thee, dear girl, how great His mercy is toward those who call upon Him. Oh! my friend, believe me none ever came to him sorrowing but went on their way strengthened, if not rejoicing!"

"I know it—I believe it, and trust the time will come when I shall experience it; but the cloud still hangs over me. To-morrow, when this sacrifice is made, it may be lifted. Farewell to thee, and remember to stand beside the south pillar. But stop once more. Hast thou no bridal-gift for thy Alice? no offering to remind me of thy love, on the morrow?"

Edith bethought her a moment, and then going to the window upon which there was a rose-tree just coming into bloom, she laid her hand upon a snowy bud that seemed just ready to expand into full beauty, but her first touch shook its snowy petals in a shower upon the flower.

"Well, well," cried Alice, "it is a token of my own early blighted youth. Nay, seek no other, the emblem suiteth me not;" but Edith insisted, and gathering the only others that remained, she placed them with a smile in her friend's hand.

"Look, Alice, they are bound together in one stem, emblematic of our affection. The sun of prosperity shall expand them into perfect bloom."

"They shall deck my bosom on the morrow, and I will wear thy affection there long after its frail emblem is faded."

In the morning, Lisbet prepared for the duties of the toilet with a pride exceeding that of any other waiting-woman in the colonies. Alice sat passive be-

neath her hands, paying no heed to the girl's attempts to arouse her attention or amuse her during the operation.

"There's ne'er a lady in Boston town but is clear burned up with envy of my dear mistress this bright morning; and did any body ever see a beautifuller day for a weddin'! The sun shines as clear and bright as if he'd been and washed his face for the 'casion; and there's a white cloud layin' under him, just like a towel that he'd wiped it on and then throwed down at his feet. Of course he's ordered the wind to carry it out o' sight, which it'll do shortly. (There's a lovely curl!)

"Lack-a-day! Who'd a thought when I came here that the time was so near when she which was then a careless, blithesome child was to grow into a woman and git married! It appears like only yisterday, and here I stand a deckin' that child as was then, in her bride's clothin'. (There never was a gown set so splendid as that!) 'Marriage is a lottery,' folks says, only the difference is, that one's against the law and tother ain't. Howsever, it ain't often that a prize is drew on both sides as in the present instant. Such a bridegroom Venus herself might be proud of—so tall and beautiful, and what a mind! That's what I look at! He has the spirit of a saint—he has; and I'll be bound he'll never cross *his* wife—not he! Just to behold these flowers that the governor hisself has sent.

There 's rosebuds that looks as plump as Deacon Grigson after a hearty dinner ; and sich splendid 'amelias—ah ! these is the brides' own flowers. How that does look in your hair ! and this one 's to go on the other side—there, there could n't be any thing handsomer. But, mercy ! Miss Alice—you ain't a goin' to spoil it all by puttin' them ugly little withered things in your bosom, and here 's such magnificent ones layin' all about ! Now, please—but, gracious ma, there's the carriage come !" and Mr. Harding coming to the door at the moment, and calling, "Alice, my love, art thou ready ?" in a tremulous voice. Lisbet had only time to throw her lady's cloak around her and don her own wrapping, muttering to herself as she did so, "To think she would go and spoil it all with those ugly little roses ! Well, if Mr. Mildman don't have his hands full, I'm mistaken !"

Mr. Harding cast a look of pride upon his lovely child, and folding her tenderly to his bosom, whispered, "My own little darling, always !" then hurrying her to the carriage, they were seen walking together up the church aisle to the altar.

As they passed on, Alice cast a hurried glance toward the south pillar, and a half smile of pleasure lighted up her face as she placed her hand upon the token in her bosom, but the next instant the smile was arrested, a deadly pallor overspread her countenance, and a wild gaze of terror shot from her eyes. Mr.

Mildman took his place by her side, and her father supported her on the other hand. The officiating minister made what he considered an appropriate address—somewhat lengthy, and entering, perhaps, more minutely than in our day would be deemed necessary—upon the duties of the marriage relation; after which he asked the usual question—"If any one knew cause," etc. At this there were two persons present who moved involuntarily—one was Edith, who clasped her hands tightly over her bosom, and the other a youth, apparently a stranger, who started forward a pace or two, and then, as if recollecting himself, resumed his former position. When they were directed to join their right hands, Mr. Mildman extended his to receive his bride's, but Alice made no movement; her eyes remained wildly fixed upon space. Mr. Mildman noticed her peculiar manner with much alarm, and tried by whispers to arouse her, but in vain. It was not, however, until he had taken the marriage vow, and promised to protect and cherish the fair young girl at his side, from that time forward, and the same had been demanded of the bride, that the officiating minister, fixing his eyes upon Alice, became aware of her unnatural expression. At the same moment, astonished at the pause, Mr. Harding, who had been until now absorbed by his own emotions, looked up, and was struck with consternation at her appearance. He threw his arms about her, and addressed her by every

endearing epithet—"My child, Alice, art thou ill? Speak to thy father? What is it aileth thee, my own?" But her eyes moved not from the spot upon which they had at first become fixed, and the color of life did not return.

"She is ill," exclaimed the minister. "The ceremony can not proceed at present. She had better be removed."

They attempted to lead her away, but at this she resisted, saying in a clear, articulate whisper—"Look, look, he has come to reproach me! See, he beckons me—I must away. I am false, he reproaches me. Hark! they are my own words he utters—"Not even my father's command shall compel me to an union with another!"

"This is no fit place for her," said Mr. Mildman—"Alice," he whispered—"come Alice, let us go!"

"Not with thee! No, I am not thy bride, but his. I am wedded, but it is with the dead. He calls me to him now, and I must away. The grave shall witness our bridal."

"My child, my child, what meanest thou? Alas, her mind wanders"—cried the distressed father—"come home with me, dearest, and fear no one."

"No, not with thee, thou wilt not let me go with him—thou didst never love him. Where is Edith—she was his only friend—my only true adviser. This is a false and cruel world, and we two will go." So

saying, she broke from her father and lover, who sought to restrain her, and making her way to Edith's side she seized her hand and drew her toward the door. Mr. Mildman followed, and whispered to the trembling girl—"Go with her for God's sake, and get her from this crowd as speedily as may be!"

Edith passed her arm around her and led her gently toward the entrance, but just as they were about to leave the house Alice grasped her arm so tightly that she could scarcely refrain from crying out with pain. Edith followed the direction of her gaze, and what was her surprise at beholding her former lover, Edward Stanley, endeavoring to make his way through the crowd that thronged the entrance. In a moment the strange excitement of her friend was explained. "Alice," she whispered, "I see him too—it is Edward. Thou hast made a strange mistake, for this is his living and bodily shape. He is not dead, for there he stands before our eyes."

The eyes of Alice sought her face with a glance half of doubt and half entreaty. "They have all deceived me but thee"—her overstrained strength yielded, and she fell back fainting into her father's arms.

They lifted her, insensible, into the carriage, and Edith, who could not release herself from her grasp, was obliged to follow, which Mr. Harding seeing, he desired her to go with his daughter. She complied, and they were quickly at his own home.

When Edward Stanley saw Alice fall he pressed nearer and regarded her for a moment in silent distress. He then waited until Mr. Mildman came forward to assist in getting her into the carriage, when he approached him and said in a voice audible only to him—"You shall account for this!" The minister, however, seemed to pay him no attention, but quietly made his way out of the crowd and disappeared.

Alice was soon divested of her bridal robes and put to bed; and although many restoratives were resorted to, it was long before any of them seemed to produce an effect. Mr. Harding paced the apartment in an agony of alarm, and Lisbet threw herself upon her knees by the bedside, wringing her hands and uttering various expressions of self-reproach.

Occasionally Mr. Harding approached the bed and called upon his daughter in tones expressive of the deepest tenderness to speak to him, if only a word, and tell him what had disturbed her so strangely.

Edith was the only one who retained her presence of mind sufficiently to follow the directions of the physician, which she did most assiduously.

"She has been unhappy—I know it. I have not guarded her as I ought. I blindly hastened this day, thinking it would bring back her health and gladness. Doctor—doctor—will she—oh, she *must* recover from this, and then I will know every thing from her own

lips, for she has been hiding something from her old father—my poor lamb!”

“Alack, alack! it is my fault,” chimed in Lisbet—
“but I only did as I was bid. My dear sweet mistress, only say that you forgive me!”

“What does the girl mean?” cried the father.
“Rise this instant and explain this, if thou canst!”

“Oh, sir—I can not, I dare not. Woe is me to deceive so sweet a lady!”

“It were best this room were quiet, sir. If you will have the goodness to send that girl away and to leave your daughter to this kind maiden and myself, it will be better for her. I will bring you word of the slightest perceptible improvement.”

Mr. Harding mastered his feelings, and took his station outside the chamber-door, where he strained every nerve to catch the first sound of his daughter's voice.

At length his stout heart bounded, as the door was gently opened and the doctor with his hand raised to command silence, appeared, and giving him a nod of encouragement, once more closed the door upon him.

He fell upon his knees on the threshold, and raised his streaming eyes in gratitude to heaven, while his stout frame quivered with suppressed emotion.

Alice opened her eyes and gazed around in wonder, then fixed them upon Edith's face, who bent over her with a cheerful smile and kissed her forehead.

"Edith; thou here? But what does it all mean? Was it a dream? ah, no, it could not be," and she pressed her hand to her forehead and began to look bewildered again.

"It is all well, dearest, and just as thou couldst wish."

"And where was I a moment ago, where is my father and—and—oh, Edith," and another look of alarm came into her face, "am I—tell me—was I not—"

"Thou art here safe in thy own chamber, Alice, and art Alice Harding still, so do not trouble thyself further now, I beg thee."

"Then I am not wedded," she cried, with a look of joy, but also of apprehension.

"No, thank God, thou art not!"

"Ah, yes, thank God, indeed, for that; but, Edith, there was something more. I saw a fearful vision," and a shudder ran over her frame.

"And I saw a vision too, but not a fearful one," answered Edith, smiling.

"What was it, Edith?—but thou dost not understand me."

"Yes, yes, I do. It was a vision of flesh and blood. I saw him, and what is more, I touched him; he was real and not a spirit, as thou didst fancy."

"Edith, oh tell me who it was thou saw. In pity, tell me truly, for yet I fear thou understandest me not!"

"It was Edward Stanley, as surely as thou see'st me now. How couldst thou be so mistaken, Alice, in regard to him?"

"Now, indeed, I thank God that I have not his blood upon me! Edith, the dark cloud is leaving me, and I see a ray of brightness." She gave vent to her feelings in tears, which the physician seeing, he left her, saying she would do very well now and required his presence no longer. He assured Mr. Harding of this as he passed him at the door, telling him that her strange attack was caused by extreme nervous excitement, and warning him that every thing of an agitating nature must be carefully avoided.

When Mr. Harding could entirely control his feelings, he visited his daughter's chamber, and smilingly expressed his pleasure at seeing her so far recovered. And now, for the first time, he noticed that the two girls whom he had supposed strangers to each other, appeared to be on terms of friendly intimacy, and that Alice's selection of Edith from among the crowd was not the result of accident. Doubtless his countenance betrayed what was passing in his mind, for Alice said, "My father, already thou knowest this dear maiden, and thou shalt soon hear how she became my friend, and why I have such cause to prize her friendship. I have much to tell thee, for—yes, Edith, I have done forever with concealments now."

"Say no more at present, for thy own health's sake.

"I must leave thee now," and seeing her friend's look of disappointment, she added, "I have been absent from my father a long time."

"Ah, yes, go then. I was selfish to keep thee from him, but to-morrow come again. I shall need thy presence to sustain me."

"Maiden," said Mr. Harding, "I know not how to thank thee for thy kindness. But for thy calmness and wisdom it would have fared but sadly with my poor child. I would thou couldst tarry with her, but we must not ask it at present."

"Farewell, dear Edith," said Alice, and drawing her closer, she whispered, "thou hast been more than bride's-maid to me to-day, and see, here is thy little token. I have kept it through all."

Alice was now so eager to tell her father every thing, that she could scarcely wait with patience for the day to go by. On his part he was thoroughly mystified. Pained as he was at the discovery that she did not really love Mr. Mildman, he was resolved that nothing should oppose her wishes, but that she should be left entirely at liberty to follow her own inclinations. Alice herself, quite ignorant of the unfair means her lover had employed to make her his own, could not sufficiently condemn herself for causing him such pain and mortification. But she no longer persisted in the error of resolving to become his wife, in order to atone for the

injury she imagined she had done him. She saw that her mistake lay further back than that, and by so doing she should only be involving them both in a deeper error, and one beyond repair.

While engaged in these reflections, her father once more entered to inform her that the minister desired to speak with her, and marking the pallor that overspread her face, he added, "I told him, Alice, that thou must be spared all excitement to-day, and he bade me say to thee, that what he had to impart could only give thee joy, and relieve thy mind of much anxiety. Nevertheless, it shall be as thou pleasest. Be influenced in this, as in more important matters, by thy own wishes, and remember, Alice, there is nothing thou canst ask of me, which shall not be joyfully granted thee."

"Oh, my father, how I have wronged thee! I ill deserve this kindness from thy hand. But let him come. I should do him this justice, for I fear I have greatly injured him."

In a few moments Mr. Mildman entered the room. His face was very pale and haggard, and Alice was alarmed at seeing him look so ill. For a short time neither spoke, and then Alice, extending toward him her trembling hand, said, in a voice that was scarcely audible, "Canst thou, oh canst thou indeed, forgive me?"

"Alice," he replied, in a tone that sounded sepul-

chral, and without touching the hand she held toward him. "It is I who am come to ask thy forgiveness, and to resign the hope so long and ardently cherished, of one day making thee my own!"

The sorrow and self-reproach that Alice felt could not prevent her heart bounding with joy at this declaration.

"Yes, thou whom I thought this day to call my bride, I come hither to renounce that precious claim, and oh, Alice, not only that, but to sink myself forever in thy esteem; to be to thee worse than a stranger, for thou wilt henceforth remember me only to scorn me and to despise. I shall be below thy pity, who so lately thought to find more than earthly happiness in thy love!"

"Forbear, I beseech you, Mr. Mildman. It is I who have crossed your path for evil. Woe is me, that the devices of a silly girl should work such misery!"

"Do not weep, Alice, nor reproach thyself. Thou hast been but the innocent butterfly that sported through thy summer hour in the sunshine, and I was the treacherous and cruel enemy that entangled thee in its snare. Thou knowest not the means I used to attain my object, but thou shalt know, thou and thy trusting father too, and he also who with thee I have so deeply injured—ye shall all hear my story. It is a bitter atonement I must make for the sins into which my evil passions led me. I will acknowledge all; and

when my tale is told I will go hence to labor in a new and arduous field, and strive to make the toils and self-denial of the future atone for the falsehood of the past.

"Alice, I would not have disturbed thee to-day, but I knew that what I had to tell thee would give thee joy. Yes, though it wrings my heart so terribly, I know it thrills thine with grateful happiness! Fear not I shall ever darken thy pathway more, and I thank God, dear girl, that His hand intervened to-day to prevent our unhallowed union! I thank Him that He interposed to save thee from such misery, and me from so great a sin. And now it is my chief wish to secure thy happiness, and if I can so far atone for my faults as to succeed therein, it shall be the dearest solace of my remaining days. To-morrow thou shalt hear my story. We shall meet then, when I will bid thee farewell forever!"

"I, too, have some errors to confess. I am sorely to blame, but I thought to atone for it all by a life of devotion, if not of affection."

"I knew thou wouldst make such a sacrifice, and I selfishly thought to exact it of thee. But I must not say too much now lest I weary thee. Yet Alice, do not reproach thyself for aught thou mayst deem injurious to me. What do I not owe to thee! Thou taughtst me the path of duty in which God's servant should walk. I was vain and puffed up with selfish

pride. Man's praises rang in my ears, and I loved the voice of adulation. Through my love to thee I have learned humility. Yes, I have repented in tears and mourning. Oh, Alice, thou hast been my Guardian Angel, and must I lose thee forever?"

Alice answered not except by tears and sobs; but her tears were such as relieve the o'erburdened heart, and while she wept, prayers of joy and gratitude mingled with her sorrow.

"When I part from thee, I part from all that makes the sunshine of this life to me. I go to labor through the long night of sorrow and repentance, and to fix my only hope of happiness upon the bright eternal morning. Yet it would glad my solitude to think that sometimes in thy joy thou cast'st a thought of pity and forgiveness on one who deserves only scorn and detestation. Oh, Alice, think not always of me thus; but let it soften thy condemnation to know how deep my love has been to thee, and how the hope of winning the gift of thy affection had almost lost me heaven!"

When Alice looked up, he was gone; and the now humbled girl sank upon her knees and poured out the first heart-felt prayer she had for a long time been able to utter. Submissive as a little child she acknowledged her errors, and sought that peace and pardon which none ever seek in vain. "Ah," she thought—

"I see now why I had not a blessing on my prayers before. It was because I persisted in wrong. It was because I was obstinately bent upon a course which I knew had not heaven's approval!"

CHAPTER XXV.

ON the following morning a little company had assembled in Mr. Harding's study. Alice, pale from the excitement of the previous day, but with the old light rekindled in her eyes, that had for a long time been hidden, nestled close to her father's side, and he, looking as if some long missing treasure were restored to him. Edith's chair stood close by that of her friend, and they exchanged frequent glances of affectionate kindness and sympathy. Mr. Harding had already heard the history of their acquaintance from his daughter's lips, and formed a secret resolve that, come what would, so long as he had power to protect her, the Quaker's daughter should never want a friend.

In a little while, he who was to have been the bridegroom of yesterday made his appearance, and all were startled by the change a few hours had made in him. But he came not alone. Alice did not dare to raise her eyes, for she knew that his companion was Edward Stanley. Her father received him with a quiet dignity of manner, though there was some embarrassment on the part of each. He did not attempt to speak to Alice, but took his seat in another part of the room.

Mr. Mildman glanced around, and then remarked with an effort, "There is another person who should be present: it is Lisbet." Mr. Harding and Alice both looked up astonished, and he added, "it is no more than justice."

"Nay," answered Mr. Harding, "methinks that is unnecessary. She is an unfit recipient of such matters."

"She has looked more deeply into the secrets of some present than thou knowest of, my friend; for I will call thee so, once more. I beg that she may be summoned."

Lisbet, who had either been sick or feigning sickness since the previous morning, was, with some difficulty, prevailed upon to make her appearance. At length she stole into the room, with her apron to her eyes, and dropped into the seat nearest the door.

"You all know," began Mr. Mildman, with a painful effort, "that within a few months a change has come over this then happy family. In me you behold the cause of this change, and it now becomes my duty to endeavor to repair the injury.

"Since that fair girl sprung from the child into the maiden, I have marked her as my own. I set her apart from others, and said, 'this flower shall be mine, no other hand shall cull the lovely blossom.' Yet think not it was affection that first prompted me to the conclusion, for avarice and ambition were the motives by which I was actuated. Accordingly, I made my-

self a spy upon her every movement, I watched her with a jealous eye, and many a gay and youthful rival was banished her presence through my influence. But the time came when her heart was won by a noble-minded youth, well worthy her pure affection. I saw it, and resolved to thwart their mutual love. To aid me in this, I placed a spy about her, and thus wrought my secret purpose. God forgive me for leading astray an ignorant though zealous soul, who came to me for counsel. Through my means, Alice was persuaded to conceal from her father the state of her affections, and to resist the honorable entreaties of him who loved her, to reveal their attachment to her natural protector. Meanwhile I sought to turn the father's mind against the youth, and finally succeeded. His once warm and hearty welcome was turned into a forbidding frown. Doubt and distrust were sown between them, and at length this youth, toward whom I was professing the warmest friendship, was driven by my acts to leave this neighborhood; and no sooner was he gone, than I began to devise a plan by which I might entangle the maiden in my toils, and at last claim her as my own.

"At this time an opportunity offered, favorable to my purpose. An accident, with which you are already acquainted, brought Alice into contact with a member of the much persecuted sect called Quakers, and awoke in her kind and grateful heart a lively interest in them."

"Let me say a word, now," interrupted Alice, "for here I am most deeply culpable. I thought to use the influence I knew I possessed on you to effect my own purposes. And had I then yielded to Edith's counsels all this unhappiness might have been avoided. But I was willfully blind, and it was only just I should suffer the penalty, though I would none other were involved in the misery my conduct has caused."

"Hush, Alice—thy conduct child! Thou little knowest what a small share thou had'st therein, how thou wast hedged in by me, and how thy actions were controlled by the secret influences I employed."

"Oh, my sweet mistress," now cried Lisbet, coming forward, and throwing herself at Alice's feet, "you will never forgive me, I know, for playing the spy upon you as I have done!"

"Thou, Lisbet!" cried Alice and her father, in the same breath of astonishment.

"Yes, indeed I did, and I don't wonder you're surprised to hear it, for I'm aware that nobody would suspect me of such like conduct toward my benefactions! Indeed, and indeed, dear master and mistress, I hain't had a night of quiet rest, but has been troubled with night-mare and awful dreams, ever since I carried that letter to the wrong individual that was give me to take to Mr. Stanley!"

"What does she mean? What letter, girl? Speak the truth, or on my life—" but Mr. Harding checked

his wrath which had been rising for some time, and set his teeth hard as Lisbet went on.

"Oh, sir, it was one Miss Alice give me the night before she was took so sudden, and nobody but Mr. Mildman and me knew what ailed her. But, mercy alive, what am I a saying, dear, dear," (in fact Lisbet began to fear that should she remain silent and leave the minister to tell all the story, she should gain no credit for her part of the confession, but on the contrary might not only lose her excellent place, but also the reputation she so highly valued, of exemplary piety.)

"Alice, with thy consent I will explain her meaning. It was a note which Alice wrote to Edward in her excess of sorrow at his expected departure. It was intended to recall him, and she further purposed, even at that late day, to try to remedy her fault by confessing every thing to her father. This, however, did not suit with my opposing plans; and as to the girl, she had my orders to intercept all such communications. Restrain thine anger, young man, thou spendest on it one whose actions have injured himself far more than thee!"

"Alice," said Mr. Harding, in a tone indicating the deepest sorrow, "wherefore was all this hidden from thy father? Have I been so harsh and stern a parent to thee that my severity merited this usage?"

She threw herself weeping upon her father's neck.

"Do not blame her, that too was my work. Through this girl, I filled her mind with doubts and suspicions even of thee, for I feared that her candor would defeat my deep designs. But let me be brief, for this scene grows too painful for my endurance, and the worst is yet untold."

"Nay, thou hast told enough," cried Alice. "Oh, father, surely he has made amends; bid him say no more!"

"Thy kindness shall not spare me! When all these obstacles were removed from my path, I obtained this fair girl's consent to our betrothal. I knew she could not love me, but let me do myself the justice to say that the passions which first moved me had given place to the deeper one of devoted affection. I knew she loved another, and witnessed her efforts to banish his image from her heart, and I also knew she struggled vainly. It was interwoven with the very chords of life, and I pondered long for a plan by which to sunder them. At last a cruel device took possession of my mind; I told her Edward was no more!"

Mr. Mildman paused, and a shudder ran over his audience. "Yes, I told her he was dead! How it has wrought upon the poor girl's mind, you have seen in the change which has come over her. I saw it, and alarmed at the fearful effect, I hastened our intended marriage, hoping that wedded devotion would atone for all the past, and trusting in the power of such deep

love as I felt toward her to once more make bright the pathway I had shaded. But it pleased God to defeat my purposes, and from my very soul I thank him!

"The maiden, already well-nigh driven to distraction, saw thee, Edward, among the crowd assembled to witness our bridal, and believing thee dead already, her bewildered senses quite deserted her, and she mistook thy living and breathing form for a messenger from the grave.

"The rest is known to you. For me, I have little more to do here, and soon I go where no eye that has ever looked upon me shall behold me again.

"Lisbet, come hither. My poor girl, I fear the injury I have done thee is beyond repair. Thou camest to me for ghostly counsel, and hast learned other lessons of a dark, and perhaps a fatal character!"

"Oh, sir," sobbed Lisbet, "don't talk so, don't, for the love of Heaven! If it had n't been for you, sir, I should a been the worst and most unmanageable girl in all Boston, instead of being considered a tolerable sincere Christian—leastways as much so as this fallen nature is capable of, under some circumstances. But I've been wicked, and was too easily led away to deceive my own dear lady, though, as you know, sir, it was hoping to be the means, through affliction, of fetching her into the fold. Indeed I've learnt a lesson, and if earthly natures is so gracious as to forgive me—which they'll surely do, followin' the example set by them as

is above the best of us—why, I'll never hold—my head—so—so high above—my neigh—neighbors—again, sir, in—in—dee—deed—s—sir!”

“Thou hast yet much to learn of true humility, Lisbet, and God grant that this prove a lesson and not a snare to thee! I have said all that concerns thee to hear.”

But Lisbet did not go, and Mr. Harding casting an angry glance toward her, added, “dost thou hear, wench?” upon which her sobs redoubled, and with an anxious look at Alice, she remarked, “that her mistress looked so bad that she thought she might want her to stay and assist her.” To which observation she received no reply, and slowly turning to leave the room, she again remarked, with some asperity in her tone, that she “hoped her benefactions would remember that what she had done was out of pure Christian zeal for her mistress, and according to the advice of her superiors.”

The minister continued, now addressing himself to the Quaker's daughter, “Maiden, thou hast this day heard a tale calculated to shock a mind less grieved by utterance of falsehood than thine own. There are some of thy people who deem they owe me a debt of gratitude for my efforts in their behalf. It is due to them to say that although at first my motives were not pure, yet since I have witnessed the purity of their private life and the Christian patience with which they

submit to outrage and injustice, fearing naught in the performance of what they regard their duty, and making truth their guide—what was once bitter enmity in my mind against them, is changed into sincere pity and respect. Their errors I do deeply deplore, and while I would guard others against falling into the same, I would point them to many characteristics worthy their imitation. It is enough to say of thee, that I have striven to separate thy fair friend from thy influence, because I felt that it was such as must defeat my own designs. In thy father's lot and thine own, I shall ever feel a deep interest. Thou hast friends in this household, and I can desire for thee no more efficient protection.

"But there is one more act of justice I would see done," and he turned toward Alice, whose face was still hidden in her father's bosom, and then to Edward, to whom Mr. Harding now extended his hand.

"Spare yourself further interference, sir, I will speak for myself here!" said the young man, in a scornful tone, as he advanced and clasped once more the hand of his father's friend.

"It is enough," said Mr. Mildman, as if he would be spared the scene further, "my labors here are ended. I go to reclaim the souls that lie in the darkness of ignorance and midnight superstition. Into the wigwam of the Indian will I bear the fruits of knowledge gained in the bitterness of self-humiliation; and God

permit that my sins may be atoned for by zealous and unceasing labors for the good of my brethren! I would leave these scenes in peace with all men, and for the injury I have done them ask their kind forgiveness, though knowing that it is far more than I merit. Let my humiliation this day bespeak my penitence, and he who was never God's servant so truly as now, dares to pray that upon each one of you may rest his blessing."

"Forgive him, father," whispered Alice, in a tone of entreaty, and Mr. Harding answered,

"God has been good to me, and in token of gratitude to him I can, I do. But had thy treacherous designs succeeded, methinks thou had forfeited all forgiveness, either of earth or heaven. But I tread not on a fallen enemy. Go thy ways in peace, and may He permit thee to find the consolation thou art seeking!"

It is always easy to pardon an unsuccessful rival, and Edward bestowed upon the minister such forgiveness as in his newly dawning happiness he could well afford to one who had his hearty contempt. Mr. Mildman felt that this was so, and turned from him with a sigh of pain.

"It is what I merit. Alice, I have a trust to commit to thee. The wrong that I have done that ignorant girl weighs upon me heavily, and I must leave it to thee to restore her faith in all that is pure and holy. Watch over her as one whose soul is in danger, and, for the sake of my peace, strive to reclaim her."

Alice did not speak, but to the great annoyance of Edward, who looked as if he thought the touch pollution, extended her hand to the minister. He took it in both his own, and, almost overpowered by his emotions, he murmured—"Farewell! farewell to thee, and to the brightness of this life forever!"

He was gone, and they never saw him again. But years after they heard of a white-haired holy man who dwelt amid the prairies, and pointed many a forest child the way that leads to heaven.

CHAPTER XXVI.

EDITH made her escape so quietly that no one knew the moment of her disappearance, and she returned to her own sad home without one selfish thought to cloud the joy she felt in the happiness of her own dear Alice. Scarcely had she reached her father's bed-side when Mr. Harding was beside her.

"I come," he said, "to perform a willing duty, friend, we have met before—dost thou remember?"

"I remember thee as one who interceded in behalf of myself and my child in an hour of danger and sore trial, and I thank thee!"

"Thou art too generous. Think not I am here to remind thee of a debt so trifling; but to ask thy forgiveness for an act which I now blush to acknowledge."

"I am ignorant of what thou speakest, and recall no act of thine which calls for my forgiveness."

"Surely thou canst not have forgotten that we had met before that time thou spoke of."

"Friend, my memory is indeed at fault here, and I must ask thee to excuse it in one whose mind has been engrossed by cares and anxieties."

"Well, well, I could never have believed it! and am the more deeply ashamed because thy generosity has buried it in oblivion. It was I who, one day encountering thee in thy quiet walks, assailed thee with a rudeness for which I desire to make amends."

"Say no more. Enough that it was forgotten. By this thou mayst be sure I cherished no malice."

"It is a proof of the nobleness of thy mind! Would I had that within *me* which would enable me so freely to forgive injuries. Friend, thou art ill and feeble, how fares it with thee? Maiden, with thy consent, I will speak with thy father alone. Thou need'st not fear now to trust him with me thus."

John Morrison watched her retreating form until she disappeared through the doorway, when he heaved a deep sigh. "The time that remains to me is short, and but for that one anxious thought I should go on my way hence rejoicing!"

"Old man! let not this disturb thy departing moments. I owe thy daughter a debt which I can never repay—it is not only the life, but the happiness of my own and only child. Thou knew'st it not? Nor did I, believe me, until to-day, or I should have shown my sense of the obligation sooner. Yes, my Alice declares that but for her she would long ago have ceased to struggle with what she imagined was her fate. Brother, our children are most dear to each other. Alice loves Edith with a sister's love, and shall share with her a

father's protection. Her welfare and happiness shall be dear to us as our own; for we have marked her modest worth and noble virtues, and there are few who would not do well to emulate them!"

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his mercies unto me! I have believed that this day would come at last, that friends would arise to her in her hour of need. My friend, thou hast the blessing of a dying man. Thou hast removed from death its only sting; thou hast robbed the grave of its victory!"

"No, no, it is not I. It is the reward of thy own and her deserts. The hand of God is here!"

"I feel that it is the hand of a good and merciful father! 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace!'"

Mr. Harding was moved to tears at witnessing his deep emotion, and kindly pressed his hand in token of sympathy.

"I am myself a father, and 'God do so with me and more' if I be not one to thy child!"

The dying man then confided his affairs to his new friend, and although his own care and foresight had arranged them so as to cause his daughter as little annoyance as possible, it was a great relief that he could place them in the hands of Mr. Harding, and thus save her the otherwise necessary pain of giving them her attention. In the course of their conversation the Quaker informed him that he had already written to

Edith's aunt, their only remaining relative to whom she could look for protection, informing her of his wish to place Edith under her care ; and that as soon as was practicable, after his decease, he proposed her return to England, accompanied by Maretah who had declared her intention never to desert her, and for whom he had made ample provision in the settlement of his affairs ; adding that, for the brief time that would probably intervene between his death and their departure, Mr. Harding's protection would not only be most gratefully received, but that without it their purpose might be altogether defeated. He also said that it would grieve him to think that any kindness of Mr. Harding's toward his child would involve him in difficulty or subject him to suspicion ; but that reasons existed which tended to remove that apprehension from his mind, and that these reasons Edith would herself, probably, reveal to him.

"Believe me, my brother, these matters shall receive my faithful attention ; and should it result, as possibly it may, in thy daughter remaining among us, she shall be, as it were, a sacred trust committed to my keeping."

"I should do my feelings wrong did I attempt to express my sense of thy kindness. I have conversed with Edith on that subject, and she thinks with me. Nevertheless, we are short-sighted mortals, and I leave it with thee to say to her that I desire her to do as may be most fitting her own wishes."

"And do not think me obtrusive if I touch upon another subject which interests me because it concerns thy spiritual welfare."

"Speak thy mind, friend. Methinks I partly divine thy meaning."

"I am aware that thy sect rejects what we regard as the command of our Master to keep His death in remembrance by the performance of an act which most Christians regard as their duty."

"Thou referest to the Supper of our Lord. Far be it from me to assume a merit which none can claim; but friend, I require not to receive from the hand of man what comes to the soul direct from that of the Great High Priest Himself. Let me ask thee if in thus striving to comply literally with what ye regard as his command, thou believest there is any spiritual profit to be derived from the external emblem?"

"Not from the external emblem, but from the act of obedience. In childlike faith we should perform his command, and that according to the manner of his instruction. If we presume to set that aside, what warrant have we that we shall receive the spirit—how know we that he will vouchsafe it in any other way than that through which he instructs us we may obtain it?"

"Thou believest then that the outward and the spiritual manifestations are inseparable."

"Not so, else we should require the constant presence of the external form, because God should be always within our hearts, and not only when we perform the outward act of obedience."

"And if he thus manifests himself, what need is there of an occasional or periodical observance of a form which may exist as void, conveying no nurture to the soul, while we know and daily experience the necessity of a constant renewal of our strength by coming directly to the living fountain and partaking of its reviving waters?"

"Simply as I said before, because we have no guaranty if we reject the means he offers us of reaching his presence to-day, that to-morrow, when those means are no longer at hand, if we come in our sin and weakness to ask his mercy, he will receive us."

"But the Scripture is full of such promises as show us that in truly humbling ourselves before Him and asking his gracious presence by which alone we have spiritual life, we shall obtain what we need. Thine own doctrine teaches thee that thou must, by repentance, come to Him, ere thou art deemed fit to approach the symbol. We have not so understood Christ as to believe that we can reach him only through a perishing medium. There is too much danger that an idol be made of the outward sign, and that in merely partaking thereof men deem they have complied with God's whole command. It is

therefore better to turn away from it entirely, and place our whole trust on that within, which is Christ born in our hearts."

"What do I hear? I thought thou hadst been one of that sect which men call Quakers!"

"And so indeed I am."

"Is it possible that they entertain such doctrines? Do they indeed believe on Him who died that we might live?"

"Verily they do. But it is too often the case that man refuses that justice to his fellow, which, if Christian love did move him, he would joyfully accord. On the other hand it is his nature to resist oppression. There is often much contention among brethren in consequence of refusing to call things by a common name. 'One is of Paul,' 'another of Apollos,' when all should say 'I am of Christ.'"

"If this be so, God forgive the blindness of those who have sinned against Him in persecuting their Christian brethren. Methinks though, thy people have been to blame in setting above these spiritual things matters of trifling moment, such as wearing the hat, and refusing to yield respect to your superiors, and many other peculiarities of manner ye persist in."

"Ah!" said the Quaker, with a smile—"thou hast come to it at last. When ye can no longer condemn our faith ye fall back upon such points as these, and

it is for wearing the hat and for offending those in authority by addressing them as equals that we are driven to banishment, and even to the gallows! But I mean not to speak unkindly; do not so consider it, my brother."

"No, no; but what have I been thinking of to tarry with thee thus, wearying thee beyond thy strength! Believe me, however, what I have this day heard from thy lips has not fallen upon unyielding soil. With God's blessing on my efforts I will make it my task to labor for the good of thy people, and there are not wanting men of strength who will arise in their behalf, for many are discontented and outraged by recent acts of wrong and severity. Ah, maiden, thou art come to chide me! But for the interest with which thy father's conversation has inspired me, I should have gone long ago. However, I go now, but, with God's permission (not regarding man's as necessary) will ere long visit you again."

CHAPTER XXVII

AFTER the interview with Mr. Harding, Edith noticed that her father's mind appeared to be more tranquil, though with a breaking heart she also saw that he was rapidly declining. The kind physician continued his frequent visits, and although his manner was somewhat more constrained than formerly, she read in it only the sad confirmation of her fears. Sometimes she caught his eye fixed upon her with an expression of mental pain which she attributed to sympathy, and was deeply grateful for the kindness from which his feelings sprung.

One evening, after a day of intense suffering, he came in to make his usual visit. His anxious look on ascertaining his patient's condition, did not escape the daughter's watchful eye, and when, after a whispered word with him, Louis informed her that he should return and remain with her father during a portion of the night, she understood his meaning but too well.

As soon as he had gone to make some preparatory arrangements, the sick man called his daughter to his bedside.

"My daughter, ask our Heavenly Parent to strengthen thee for this night. The hour has come when I am called to leave thee, but hearken to my words, my child, and God give me strength to say what I desire to say to thee !

"Praised be His name, I leave thee not without protection, but feel that thou wilt be more safe under the guardianship offered than thou hast been under mine own. Our kind friend, Gideon Harding, has promised to be a father to thee, and I have confided to him such matters as would only weary thee to hear of, and also my views with regard to thy future movements.

"Edith, there is one thing further I would say to thee. It was once a source of grief to me that thy spiritual views should differ from mine own. It is no longer. I believe thou hast what is needful to secure thy everlasting peace, and it is a subject rather of rejoicing that I bequeath not this cause of dissension, perhaps of persecution, to my child. Though we have chosen different paths through which to journey thither, I believe that we shall meet at the final goal. To-morrow, my daughter, think that thy dear mother's spirit and mine own are reunited for eternity, and view this life as but a brief day of trial, at the close of which thou too shall rejoice in our society.

"And now bring hither the Holy Book, and read to me once more from its pages the promises which are

sufficient for our support even in an hour like this. Ah, they have belied us who say that we reject its sacred counsels!"

Edith listened to her father's dying words, and complied with his request, with a degree of composure astonishing to herself. How kind is the provision of our Heavenly Father which, in moments of our deepest trial, renders the mind incapable of comprehending their reality! It is only when the occasion has gone by, and time, in a measure, accustoms us to our loss, that the truth begins to dawn gradually upon the mind, and we realize that our dear ones are departed forever. Forever?—no! for with this mournful thought comes the consoling assurance that we shall meet them in a happier home, and continue through eternity the intercourse which time had just begun!

When Louis returned, he found the sick man sleeping, while Edith sat beside him, clasping his hand in both her own, and listening for each fitful breath as if she feared it would be the last she should hear. He stood regarding them in silent emotion. "Why may I not say to this dying man, Leave thy daughter with me. I love her with an affection which shall take the place of thine. On my bosom shall her grief be soothed, and my arm shall shield her from the ills that threaten! But no, it can not be. My mother, for thy sake I can not. Duty claims the conquest over love, and this dying man must pass away without such con-

soling assurance to calm his last moments upon earth!"

The sick man now awoke, and desired to be raised a little. This being done, he attempted in a faint voice to thank Louis for his unfailing kindness. Then calling upon Maretah he gave her a few words of Christian counsel, and commended his daughter to her kindness.

"My father," answered the Indian girl, "Maretah's love shall soothe her sister's sorrow, and Maretah's hand (placing it upon her dagger) shall be swift to avenge her injuries!"

"Not so, my child! Thou must learn to leave vengeance to Him who alone knoweth how to wield it. Edith will teach thee these milder principles of Christian doctrine."

"Forgive my haste, father! The Indian's blood yet runs wildly through my heart. Maretah forgot she was no longer the daughter of the forest. But she will be her weak sister's mother and her father. She will wipe away her tears, and when danger threatens, it shall reach her only through Maretah's bosom!"

He spoke no word to Edith, but casting upon her a look full eloquent, he opened his arms, and she flung herself weeping upon his bosom.

"Heavenly Parent behold her! Let thine arm sustain, thy care defend her, and thy kindness bless!" His breath came faster, a slight shadow passed over his frame. There was a silence of some moments,

when Louis approached quietly and saw the spirit had departed. He stole noiselessly away, and left the daughter to her sorrow.

The gray dawn crept painfully through the lattice of the silent chamber, making the heart sick and faint with its unwelcome revealings, and Edith turned from its unsympathizing brightness with the feeling that life had now indeed but little left for her to cling to. There were in her conduct no loud nor violent demonstrations of sorrow, but the silent tokens of a deeper agony; and thrice welcome on that solemn morning had been the messenger of death to her—the sorrowing orphan. Gladly would she have laid her young head to rest forever in her father's grave, and joyfully have bidden farewell to a world wherein she had experienced as yet, little else than sorrow.

It was forbidden that "Quakers and other hereticks" should be interred in consecrated ground, but there was a little secluded spot which was privately used as a burial-place for those who died in the faith of the Church of England, where Louis knew he could obtain permission for the Quaker's dust to repose. It was necessary to consult Edith on these matters, which was done as gently as possible, and all needful arrangements being completed, she was left for this day with the Indian girl, to sit for the last time by her father's bedside. As she took her seat there and clasped his

lifeless hand in her own, Maretah placed herself at the foot of the bed and began a chant for the departed. There was something so soft and mournful in her tone and action, that it could not jar upon the daughter's feelings, but rather served to soothe and calm her mind.

"Whither hast thou gone, oh, our father?
Why art thou so silent and so sad?
Wilt thou not awaken with the morning,
When the sunbeam calls the hunter to the hills?
He has gone to the happy hunting-grounds—
Never shall we welcome him again!
Grieved and weary was he with his burden.—
In the land of rest he lays it down!
There is one who hastes to give him welcome,
There is one who takes him by the hand.
'Tis the wife who has waited for his coming,
Who has listened for his footsteps long!
She waited on the brow of the mountain,
Her white hand beckoned him to come,
And together through the mists of the morning,
On the wings of the breezes they are flown!"

The first sunbeams of the early morning fell upon a solemn group assembled around a new-made grave. Mr. Harding's arm supported the drooping form of the sorrowing daughter, while Maretah knelt at her side and bathed the hand she held with sympathizing tears. Louis stood by the side of the grave, and in a tremulous voice read, at Edith's request, the burial service of the Church of England. When the coffin was lowered into the grave, and "ashes to ashes, dust

to dust," was said, Edith left the friendly arm that sustained her and threw herself upon her knees beside the open grave. She cast one long, lingering look upon the coffin, and then, raising her glance to heaven, she lifted her clasped hands upward, and seemed to breathe a silent prayer, after which she suffered herself to be led away. And once more in her now desolate home, so deep was the aspect of grief she wore, that each one who approached her felt that words of comfort were but an idle and discordant sound. Nothing could exceed the tender delicacy of Maretah, who, by many an unobtrusive act of kindness, showed her appreciation of her sister's sorrow; thus soothing her grief with the sympathy of her untutored feelings; for Edith was not one to remain insensible to such affection, and in the midst of her distress, she did not forget to thank her heavenly Father for bestowing upon her in her need so true and kind a friend as this, the daughter of the forest.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"EDITH, thou must share our home. Come to us, and as my father has already told thee, so long as thou wilt remain with us, thou shalt be as our own."

"Not yet, not yet, dear Alice! Oh, I can not so soon leave this spot where his spirit seems to linger!"

"It is no longer safe, dearest; and our love shall strive to comfort thee!" Alice urged gently.

"There is naught on earth I fear now. Yet I will come, for it was his wish. Only let me stay in this now sacred place a little longer, for as soon as may be I must leave these scenes forever!"

"What dost thou mean? Leave these scenes? Oh, Edith, whither wilt thou go?"

"To England," she answered, with an effort. "To that far off land, no longer dear to me!"

"Then why wilt thou go, when we who so dearly love thee desire thee to remain with us, and thou thyself, oh, Edith, surely thou dost not wish to leave us!"

"No, Alice; all that is dearest to me is here. But this life has ever been to me a scene of duty and self-sacrifice. I can not do as I would."

"And why not? what should call thee there except it were thy own free will to go?"

"Duty; duty to the sister of my mother who claims from me a daughter's love—to you, my friends here, who risk so much in my behalf—and lastly, I owe it to myself to go!"

"Edith, if I could find it in my heart to be angry with thee, I should be so now. 'Duty, duty!' is there naught on earth but that, that thou must be forever harping upon 'duty' and sacrificing thyself to others instead of sometimes consulting thine own pleasure?"

"Thou forgettest, Alice, that the one is so closely allied with the other, that I can not separate the two without destruction to the latter. Where should I find pleasure were I to forget my duty in the pursuit of it?"

"And on the other hand, can not pleasure exist and be enjoyed innocently without some grim phantom standing by its side to affright one withal? I would not have thee other than thou art, and yet I wish thy conscience were a trifle less tender."

"No, no; thou dost not, Alice. But thou canst not know all the reasons that influence me in this decision—and I can not tell them to thee. But those I have mentioned are sufficient, and beside that, thou dost forget, Alice, that I am under sentence of banishment."

"Banishment! sentence of banishment!"

"It is true, dear girl, and so thou see'st I have no choice but to go. Indeed, I had almost forgotten it too, so much has my mind been filled with other thoughts."

"But Edith, surely that sentence does not weigh against thee, and my father's voice has sufficient influence to procure thee some favor. Nay, the Governor has often called me his little pet, and I will go myself and importune him so that he will be glad to dismiss me with my petition granted. Fear not but we shall remove this obstacle, and when we have accomplished that we will set about overthrowing the others!"

"Dear Alice, I must ask thee as a favor that thou wilt do nothing of this kind, for believe me it would be useless."

"Then thou wilt go after all, and I just fancied I had found a sister! Edith, thou didst foretell the dawn of my happiness—do not forget that thine own was to be united with it. Alas, I can not rejoice in my newly-found joy if thou dost not share it with me!"

"Alice, dearest, I am indeed happy in thy returning delight. Think not that even grief can drown the spark of sympathy."

"Can I never make thee think of thyself? Wilt thou not see—dost thou not understand that there are reasons why thou shouldst not, at least, hasten

thy departure? Be not rash! others' happiness as well as thine own may depend upon thy decision."

"I scorn the affectation of misunderstanding thee, Alice, but the reasons thou dost urge are the very ones which hasten my departure, though I had thought not to mention them. At a time like this I would not permit such thoughts to have place within my mind, did I not feel it incumbent upon me, for others' peace. And Alice, thou canst urge me no longer when I tell thee that in going hence I avoid a danger which I must encounter in remaining."

Alice said no more upon the subject, but in her secret heart she cherished the belief that something would yet interpose to prevent the accomplishment of Edith's purpose, and formed a resolution to defeat it, if such a thing were possible. So, after obtaining her promise to come to them ere long, she left her, happy in the brightness that now enveloped her own future, and, in the fullness of her joy, investing that of her friend with the glow of its reflected beauty.

CHAPTER XXIX

"WHAT makes you look so sorry, brother? Are you ill?"

"No, Angeline; but I have seen that which grieves me."

"May I know what it is?"

"Yes, my little sister. You know that Edith's father has been a long time ill."

"Oh, I hope it is not any thing sad that concerns her!"

"But it is, for she is an orphan."

"Oh, Louis! is her father really dead?" asked the tender-hearted child, now weeping.

"He is, my dear; he died some days ago."

"Poor Edith! who will take care of her?"

"Her heavenly Father! for I know of no earthly protector she has now," and Louis arose and paced the room, deeply moved.

"Mamma!"

"What, my love?"

"Did you know that Edith had lost her father?"

"Yes, my dear, and I am very sorry for her."

"And brother says she has no one to take care of her!"

"It is very unfortunate. But I think she told me she had relations in England. I would advise her to go thither!"

"I hope she won't do that, for if she does, we shall never see her again!"

"No very great misfortune!" thought Mrs. Hermon, though she said nothing.

"Oh, mamma, if she could only come here, how happy it would make me!"

"That is impossible, Angeline."

"And can not I ever go to see her, and tell her how sorry I am for her?"

"It would be very improper to permit you to do so."

"But, dear mamma, what is to become of her?"

"My dear, you seem in some sort to hold me responsible for her welfare. It is not in my power to become so. I must consider first the safety of my own family."

"But I thought Mr. Mildman told us that every body was sorry for Edith's misfortunes, because every one respected her, and that even the Governor himself could not help admiring her; and I am sure God is too good to allow any one to suffer for being kind to such a person!"

"Angeline, you speak of matters you do not understand. It is scarcely becoming in a little girl to express such decided opinions."

The child looked at her mother in surprise ; for once she did not comprehend her. The tears filled her eyes as she answered, " I am very sorry if I said any thing wrong ;" and then she stole away to relieve her wounded feelings, and to grieve in secret over the sorrows she was not permitted to soothe.

In fact, Mrs. Hermon was in the predicament of one who commences by taking a wrong course, and then tries to persuade herself that it is right, and persists in it accordingly. The prejudice she had acquired against Edith was not lessened by the continual fear she felt that even should Louis refrain from declaring his affection for her, he might very naturally betray it in his conduct ; and setting this danger aside, it irritated the affectionate mother to notice that his manner had become more grave than formerly ; and that when he thought himself unobserved, he gave way to an air of sadness which was fast becoming habitual.

When Angeline was gone, he took his seat beside his mother and said with what composure he could command,

" Do you not think that after all my sister's remarks were just ?"

" Louis ! you certainly can not expect me to receive this girl again into the family !"

" Let me at least tell you my plan, mother. Before Mr. Mildman went away—I think it was because he partly suspected what my feelings toward Edith were—

he took an opportunity of telling me that he had reason to think the sentence of banishment under which the members of this sect at present rest, would cease to include Edith as soon as her father's death should occur. He added that Mr. Harding's feelings were interested in her, and that his influence might easily obtain permission for her to remain here without fear of molestation. Now, mother, what I would ask of you is, that if such permission be procured (in which event of course you would incur no risk in so doing), you will, for a short time, offer this friendless girl your protection. My object in this is to give you the opportunity of becoming more perfectly acquainted with her, and of satisfying yourself with regard to her true character. Meanwhile, to relieve your mind of anxiety on this point, I will take the opportunity to make that long anticipated journey through the colonies, which you know I planned some time ago. And, if you are really convinced, on the closest scrutiny (and I consent that you use all fair means of ascertaining the truth), that she is not a worthy wife for your unworthy son, I will then promise you to give her up forever, and never again cast so much as a regret on my decision."

"I am surprised, Louis, that you do not see the difficulties in the way of all this. In the first place, should I invite Edith here, it would perhaps be encouraging a false expectation on her part; and even were every other obstacle to your union with her removed, there

still remains the insuperable one of the difference in your religious opinions—a fruitful source of unhappiness and contention in the marriage connection.”

“Mother, I have thought of this, and feel perfectly convinced that no unhappy consequences would result from it ; because my love for her has had its source in admiration and respect for those very qualities that go to make up the true Christian character. And who knows, dear mother, but we might at last make her a convert to our own chosen religion ?”

“I should respect her less for abjuring her father’s faith to win our favor, than if she remained the most obstinate Quaker in the colonies ! And, Louis, I am forced to tell you that the promise you made me adds but little to my comfort so long as you continue to importune me on this subject, and in your heart to accuse me—as I feel you do—of injustice, and indifference to your happiness. Alas, why will yot not renounce this hope, which, it is my duty to tell you, you can never reasonably expect to realize ; and let us be once more happy, as we were before this girl came into our circle, to bring distrust and misery where all before was peace and unity !”—and her appeal ended in a flood of tears.

What could poor Louis do ? His mother had always been the object of his highest admiration and most devoted love ; and he was the more closely bound to her, because he felt that she looked on him as her protector,

and relied upon his strength as her chief dependence. This was the first cause of difference that had arisen between them, and until now, the dutiful son had never known his mother swerve from justice or refuse her ready sympathy to virtue in distress. That she required of him more than was reasonable, and not only so, but that she used means to attain her object which could scarcely be called fair, the young man felt with pain. But he also felt that he had yielded as much as duty required of him already, and that to comply with her demand was a thing not to be thought of, and next to impossible. To remonstrate would be vain, to remain and witness her distress, which he was made to feel he was the cause of, was more than he could endure; and when Mrs. Hermon looked up after her paroxysm of grief was exhausted, she found herself alone.

In such a case, tears are a final resort in a tottering cause. They are an auxiliary furnished the weaker sex by nature, and sometimes come to our aid when other means are unavailing. The storm of words may rage, the sunshine of smiles strike upon the flinty heart in vain, but it is seldom that the 'gentle dew of tears' well refined, fails to call forth the fragrance of young feeling. But, sisters, we would warn you not to use the weapon rashly! Cautionally displayed, its power is magic; but shown injudiciously or too often, the spell is broken, and man—stern, unrelenting tyrant—tri-

umphs over the anguish he inflicts, and laughs exultingly at what should wring his heart with remorseful pain !

We do not mean to say *Louis* laughed—not he ! Under such circumstances what youthful lover could ? He merely took his hat and went out, which was natural. Men usually do so in such cases. What woman who has had any experience with the sex does not know it ?

A walk of some distance wore off his doubt as well as his excitement, and he resolved to visit Edith, and after the manner of a kind friend (nothing more !) to offer his services in any matters wherein she might require advice or assistance. It was a dangerous step, but was as little as he could do—and as much !

It was then that Edith informed him of Mr. Harding's kindness in relieving her of the necessity of attending to her business affairs, and also of his fearless offer of protection, and her decision to accept it for a short time, and gratefully declined his proffered assistance. She scarcely dared enter upon a subject so nearly touching her feelings, as to return her thanks to him and to his family for all they had done for her and for her departed parent, and after faintly endeavoring to express her sense of obligation, was obliged to leave the rest to his delicacy of apprehension. But when, for the first time, he learned her intention of returning soon to England, his agitation was too great to escape her observation. He felt now, indeed, that his hopes had received

a death-blow, and he would have been utterly unable to repress the spontaneous outbreak of his feelings, but for the calmness of the young girl's demeanor, and the dignity of grief with which she was invested. He left her with a breaking heart, not knowing that he should again behold her whom he loved more than aught else that earth contained, but from whom he seemed separated by a cruel and unavoidable destiny.

CHAPTER XXX.

It may be asked what reason the Quaker's daughter now had for continuing to conceal the true state of her religious opinions ; but it must be remembered that she was placed in embarrassing circumstances. It would be but a short time that she should remain in Boston, and respect for her father's memory induced her for that time to preserve silence on the subject. It would benefit her but little to have it known, for although the knowledge of her views might screen her against open persecution, it would not remove the suspicion attached to her as her father's daughter. No one seemed in the least, to suspect her of holding opinions differing from those of her departed parent, and it now appeared to her a sacrilege to disturb that impression.

And there was another reason, which operated strongly upon her feelings of delicacy, if not upon her sentiments of filial duty. Should she now declare herself to be a member of the Church of England, what inference, regarding her relation with the young physician might be drawn therefrom ? Probably this was the chief obstacle in the way of his half-told attachment

(for his agitation on the occasion of their last interview had revealed to her woman's heart what it gave her, she feared, too much delight to know), and should she voluntarily appear as if too anxious or ready to remove it? Her delicacy took alarm at the thought, and Henriette's ill-natured remarks and unfounded suspicions, had their share in bringing about her decision.

And then she regarded her return to England as a necessity beyond all question, for she felt that she owed a daughter's duty to the sister of her beloved mother. She, therefore, did not allow herself to indulge in dreams of happiness, which, however tempting they might be, could only lead to disappointment, and the young girl—schooled in self-denial—armed herself to combat this sorrow also, and submitted to her lot in silent resignation.

She was now residing under the shelter of Mr. Harding's roof, and the happiness of Alice would have been complete, except for the thought that would every little while intrude, that she was soon to lose her forever. She had Edith's promise, however, to delay her departure until after her marriage, which was to take place in May, and Alice did not yet relinquish the hope that something would occur to detain her still longer.

* * * * *

"It should be looked to, neighbor. Were thou or I to take such a stand how would it fare with us, think

est thou? Fines and the lash were none too much for us to smart under, I warrant thee!"

"It is a shame, goodman, and a scoffing of religion and law. I tell thee, this Harding waxes of too much consequence. Pride, neighbor, pride, I say, should be humbled were it only for the good of the soul."

"It is a sad example for our youth, a sad example, and an awful victory for the enemy. And it rests on my conscience that we are responsible for a share of the evil while we pass it by thus quietly."

"True, true! Thou speakest with force and wisdom. Mark how God's judgment visited that pious and gifted youth—his servant, Ichabod Mildman. There was some secret mystery in that, neighbor."

"Ay, ay, indeed there was. And Gideon Harding's daughter was the instrument. Goodman, there is a sin I desire not to name, but love constrains me. It is the sin of witchcraft!"

"Hush, hush, name it not, though it was on my very tongue's end at the moment. They said this Quaker's daughter stood by when the marriage was going on, and that the child of our dear brother Gideon fell under her eye. They also said the heretic woman desired to wed this goodly youth herself, and so she wrought her spell on the maiden, and brought her so near death's door that it was only by God's providence she was restored to reason."

"An awful tale indeed, and further than that, my

spouse had it from good authority that the strangest part of all was that although the maiden was filled with love and affection for the youth up to that morning, that no sooner did the heretic's eye fall on her than it turned to the most bitter hatred, even to gall and wormwood!"

"And lo! what a blight fell on the goodly man, even as on Jonah's gourd, which in one night was cut down and withered. There was something wrong there, else why did God permit this to come on his faithful servant?"

"Dost thou not see, neighbor? Doubtless it came of pitying these vile heretics. I trust his mind was not tainted with their sinful doctrines."

"Ah, ah, it all comes of showing too much mercy. An' I had had a voice in the matter, there should not have been spared a single shoot of this poison vine. Cut and burn—tear out and destroy root and branch, and then our vineyard would indeed flourish!"

"Thou sayest true! But dost see, goodman, thou and I have no voice in the matter. No, we are not gifted with wealth to buy us honor among men. Nevertheless, mayhap God has chosen us as his instruments in this, and we must not shrink from our duty though it may be painful."

"Let us go to the Governor straightway. We may receive favor to move him in this righteous cause.

The souls of our dear brother Gideon and his goodly child are in peril."

"Amen, brother; and God put the sword of the Spirit into our hands wherewith to defeat the enemy. An' I had my way this heretic maiden should be bound to the cart's tail and whipped beyond the jurisdiction, according to the wholesome letter of the law."

"And a refreshing sight for Christian eyes to behold—a precious example for our youth! It is the Lord's command to disperse his enemies, and woe to the man who gives way to the weakness of pity."

"Pity! don't name it, brother! It is a device of the enemy to turn men's hearts from justice. Remember Ichabod Mildman, and what befell him for suffering that folly to overtake him!"

* * * * *

A cheerful circle was assembled around Mr. Harding's hearth, and he, not the least happy among them, looked with proud delight upon his once more gay and blooming daughter, who seemed like one restored to him after a long and weary separation. Edith's pensive features, over which a shade of sorrow lingered, offered a pleasing contrast to those of her laughing companion. Had you entered that little apartment you would scarcely have known whether to sympathize most with the joyful bright-

ness of the one, or to give your deeper attention to the subdued sadness of the other.

Edward Stanley was there too, and as he carefully inquired what task it was upon which the more serious maiden bestowed her attention, Alice, her face and neck glowing with a sudden and unwonted bloom, half in play and half earnest, seized the gossamer-like fabric, and holding it behind her with one hand, placed the other upon Edith's lips, as if to prevent the betrayal of a most important secret. In fact it was the bridal veil upon which she wrought, and as some of our lady readers may be interested to know the pattern of the workmanship, we will state that it was a border of rose-buds, which Alice declared should always be her pet device; (we regret that the exact style of the pattern and its arrangement have not descended to the present generation, the veil itself, we are assured by good authority, being some time after, cut up and converted into a little dress to be worn at a christening).

While this was going on within, there was a loud and somewhat impatient summons upon the street door, and soon after Mr. Harding was called into his study. In a few moments Edward received a request to join him there, and the two girls thought they heard voices in angry altercation. After a while Edward returned, but his greatest efforts at cheer-

fulness did not serve to conceal a certain degree of embarrassment and anxiety. To the many and close questions to which he was subjected by Alice, both regarding the individuals who had been there, and her father's errand from home at that unusual hour, he returned evasive answers, and soon something of gloom and apprehension seemed to have spread itself over the little party.

In less than an hour Mr. Harding returned, and his companions with him, and as he entered the parlor Alice saw that his face wore a troubled as well as an angry expression, a thing so unusual that it alarmed her, and springing eagerly to his side, she inquired what was the matter. Edward too, hastily came forward, and Mr. Harding, looking at him significantly, exclaimed "It is all in vain. The obstinate fools will not be put off!" Edith looked up from her work in quiet surprise, and seeing that both the gentlemen had their eyes fixed upon her with an expression of pained embarrassment, she arose from her seat, and in some little agitation inquired if there were any matters stirring which concerned her.

At this moment a rough-looking individual pushed his way into the room as if already angered by the needless delay, and casting a glance at each of the two maidens, he fixed his eyes upon Edith, and advancing toward her and taking a rough hold upon her arm, he

said: "You must come along with me, my pretty little heretic!"

"Villain, how dare thou!" cried Mr. Harding, approaching with a hasty stride. "Take thy hand off the maiden, or, by all that is sacred, I will teach thee manners in mine own dwelling!"

Somewhat abashed at this outburst, the man stood back with rather more respect in his behavior, while Edith, deeply grieved that she had brought this upon her friends, and thinking of them far more than of herself, besought her kind protector not to anger any one on her account, and added that, "if that person would consent to leave the room a moment, she had something to impart to Mr. Harding, which, perhaps, she had done wrong in not revealing sooner."

Mr. Harding accordingly turned to the man, and desired him to withdraw; but he refused.

"I 've had trouble enough with these here Quaker folk. The gal don't git out o' my grip so easy. I ain't to be cheated that way, for I 've seen sich tricks played afore to-day!" he said, shaking his head in self-satisfaction at his own shrewdness.

"But I do not intend to leave the room, friend; thou wilt find me here on thy return, and I give thee my word to go with thee then if it be needful."

The officer was still inclined to be obstinate, but at a summons from another party outside, he moved toward the door, still, however, keeping a sharp look-out upon

the motions of each individual within. Edith glanced that way and saw the good-humored countenance of her old acquaintance, Joe Makefast, and smiled as he made a motion with his foot and pulled his foretop in respect to her.

"Come along, boy," he said, "I knows the leddy well, and you may trust her ; what she says she 'll do, she 'll do. I 've know'd heaps and heaps of these Quakers, and entertained 'em too in my fine large house, and I hain't never know'd one on 'em to break promise."

Thus assured, though as if still doubting the propriety of the step, his companion consented to retire, and slowly left the room ; when he was gone, Edith appeared for a moment to be struggling with some hidden emotion, then, by a strong effort, subduing her feelings, she said :

"I would gladly have gone hence, as I trusted I might, without revealing what I must now make known for your sakes ; and if I have been to blame in concealing it, it was through respect for my father's memory, and not for any want of confidence toward you on my part. These persons are mistaken. I am not what they take me for ; I am not, and never have been a Quaker !"

Nothing could exceed the surprise of two of her auditors at this announcement. Alice, who from the first had clung to her as if determined they should not

be separated, uttered a cry of joy, and Edward, whose surprise was equal to her own, expressed a similar degree of astonishment. But Mr. Harding did not seem to share in their amazement, although he participated warmly in their pleasure.

"I suspected somewhat of this from a word thy father let fall to me. These villains shall be disappointed of their prey; but, Edith, it is needful thou shouldst go with me before the Governor."

She hastily prepared to do so, while Alice would consent to remain behind only upon her father's repeated assurances that he would bring her friend back with him, and that no one now had any authority to detain her. But the affectionate girl still clung to her as if she feared to let her go; and the interval of their absence was passed by her in a state of restless anxiety.

Closely followed by the two officers, Mr. Harding and Edith took their way to the mansion of the Governor. It was only by great urgency that they obtained an interview, and the irritation of his Excellency at being disturbed at so late an hour, boded little good to their errand.

"What now, Harding—must thou still tease me with this unmannerly girl's affairs? Methinks she has given us sufficient trouble already. Maiden, thou and thy father were released on condition that you left this place as soon as possible. Why art thou found lingering here still?"

"It is my purpose to depart as soon as I can find a passage in a vessel bound for England."

"Well, we will see that thou dost ; and meanwhile, we will have thee in safe keeping."

"On what grounds does your Excellency commit this maiden again to prison ?" demanded Mr. Harding.

"Why ask so idle a question, Harding ? It is but trifling with my patience !"

"Not so ! I supposed it was because you believed her to belong to the people called Quakers."

"Surely ; and a sufficient reason too. We must look that no further mischief is done by spreading abroad their baneful doctrines. We would save others, even thyself, Harding, and thy fair daughter from the judgment that visited that bright luminary of our Church and colony—Ichabod Mildman—all in consequence, as it is believed, of his error in defending these heretics against the merited wrath of Heaven."

"You speak of Mr. Mildman, but your Excellency is mistaken. I could tell you that would soon convince you that these people had naught to do with his sudden withdrawal. Are there no other grounds of offense against the maiden ?"

"No other ! Now I do indeed marvel at thy blindness. God grant that naught of evil come to thee for this ; but I trust we shall yet save thee as a brand from the burning !"

"But what if I should convince you that you are

mistaken here too, and that the maiden is held responsible for opinions she does not entertain?"

"What mean you, Harding? If the girl is ready to renounce these vile opinions, and be received into the bosom of our righteous congregation, God forbid we should deny her the blessed privilege! How is it, wilt thou stand beneath the gallows and declare thyself purged from the sin and disgrace of heresy?"

"Your Excellency does not understand. I have never held the opinions you denounce as heretical."

"What does the girl mean? As I live, if she dares brave us as she once did, she shall not escape, as we then mercifully permitted her to do!"

"I would simply explain that my parents were formerly connected with the Church of England, and that my mother continued in that belief and communion as long as she lived. My father held other views, it is true, but they were such as he considered consistent with his duty to God and man. My faith in the religion of my youth is unchanged and ever has been!"

"Why then hast thou falsely appeared to hold those other pernicious doctrines? and wherefore hast thou obstinately withheld the knowledge of this from those who wished thee well?"

"It was to avoid a forcible separation from my only remaining parent, and if I have, in doing so, appeared in a false light, it was owing to the severity of those laws which drove me to the measure."

"How dare thou condemn the righteous laws for a sin which thou must thyself answer. If thou hast declared thyself to be what thou wast not, nothing else shall serve thee but to stand in the place of the guilty, even at the gallows foot and publicly proclaim thyself to be what thou art!"

"It was for love of a sick and aged parent, and in the desire of performing a daughter's duty to him, that I pursued the course I did. It was that I might have the right to soothe his declining days, and render him the devotion which a child should ever yield to a parent. Thou, who art thyself a father, can scarcely blame me for this, and if I sinned therein, I pray my Heavenly Parent to forgive me!"

"Nevertheless thou art to be condemned, for when thy father gave his soul over to the enemy, he forfeited the claims of nature and affection."

"Nay, the enemy never had a victory over his righteous soul! In all things, so far as man may, my father obeyed the commands of our blessed Lord, and especially in those things which call for true Christian charity. He loved his enemies, did good to them who hated him, and prayed for them who despitefully used him and persecuted him!"

"On my soul this is a bold girl! She hath the Quaker's daring, if not his doctrine. We, who in the spirit of true charity and patience labored with this man, and for the good of his soul strove to lead him

from his errors, she calls his enemies and persecutors ! What now, saucy wench ; how dare thou speak to us in this manner ?”

“ I meant not to speak in disrespect, but as a daughter may, who would vindicate the character of a departed parent. If aught in my language seemed unbecoming in a maiden like me, to one in authority, I pray you to consider that such was not my meaning.”

“ This is more as it should be ! nevertheless thou needest for thy good, a taste of rigor. It will serve to take some of thy high-spirited pride out of thee. We will see that the wholesome potion be administered !”

“ Beware what you do,” exclaimed Mr. Harding. “ You lay your hands now on what may sear you in the handling. This girl is connected with a Church of which we have many quiet and useful members in our community !”

“ She is the Quaker's daughter, for all that, and it is scarcely better that she belongs to that Babylonish Church, with which she declares fellowship. Leave the girl with me, Harding, and come to-morrow to the Council. It will not hurt her to spend one night in custody, and to-morrow we will decide what is best to be done in her matter. Nay—say no more, she deserves this for the contempt she has shown us to-night.”

“ If you are really determined to send her to prison, you shall send us thither in company, for I declare that

if *she* has been guilty of contempt (which she disclaims), I have been equally culpable; for in naught that she has said, have I discovered any thing to condemn, or that I do not entirely coincide in! And further than that ye must look for other counsel than mine to assist in your deliberations, for I find the care of State pressing too heavily upon me, and it is my purpose to withdraw from them entirely!"

"Why, Harding, what dost thou mean? Nay, this will never do, brother; thou must not hold such a thought! These troublous times call for our wisest action, and the zeal of some should be tempered by milder policy—such as thine. No, no, thou must not desert us; we can not, and we will not dispense with the weight of thy wisdom!"

"Your Excellency is too kind, but these are indeed perilous times and call for judicious action. There are differences among us too, and it should not be so."

"Thou sayest true, brother. I have been lately harassed by complaints of dissatisfied men, and but this day thought to summon thee to assist me with thy advice. It may be, brother, that, as thou sayest, the 'cares of State' have lately pressed upon *me* too heavily, and somewhat wearied my patience. If my conduct toward thee to-night has seemed to indicate this, I beg thou wilt forget it, and let us part in peace and brotherly kindness."

"Willingly, willingly, indeed; but I can not go

home to-night except on one condition, and I am sure your Excellency would not oblige me to leave my daughter without a father's protection, even for so brief a season!"

"Ah, my pretty Mistress Alice, how fares it with her? Nay, I must not so distress my favorite as to keep you from her too long. Well, name your condition, brother, and get you home, for it grows late for quiet and orderly men to be abroad."

"I promised Alice not to come without her little friend here, and ventured to assure her that she would be free to accompany me. But, notwithstanding that, if your Excellency deem it best, I will willingly spend the night with our good Joseph here, and only for the loss of a few hours' quiet slumber, feel myself none the worse for the company I have been keeping."

"If thou shouldst lose thy sleep, I fear thou wouldst bring less wisdom to our councils to-morrow. Therefore we would recommend thee to go home, and for my pretty Alice's sake take this brave maiden with thee, if thou wilt."

"I thank your Excellency much, and so will Alice, I am sure; and you may hold me responsible for the good conduct of our young friend here as long as she remains among us."

"And I, too, thank you from my heart," said Edith, "and beg you to be assured that I had no intention of disrespect in aught I have said to-night. And if a

daughter's zeal has led me into saying what might appear as such, I pray you to excuse it."

"Well, maiden, though methinks I see somewhat of the Quaker in thy free speaking, I rejoice to learn that thou art free from the errors of their doctrine. I wish thee well, and would say that the sentence of banishment, which as a measure of safety to ourselves and our children, we have thought wise to enact against them, can not now of course include thee. Thou art, therefore, free to come and go where thou wilt, and God's favor go with thee, even to the further enlightening of thy understanding, until thou art brought, as I trust thou may'st be, within the fold of His own chosen congregation."

Edith briefly thanked the Governor in such terms as she deemed appropriate, and was soon on her way back to Mr. Harding's with a lighter heart than she carried thence. As they passed through the ante-room in which the jailor and the other dignitary were waiting, the latter cast upon her a stare of surprise and disappointment: perhaps he felt dissatisfied at being cheated of his prey. But honest Joe came forward with a double scrape, and offered his homely but sincere congratulations.

"I'm wery uncommon glad, missus, that I hain't got to turn key on you again; not that I object to the company, understand, but bekase it weighs heavy on

my heart to see creeturs of your tender sect in sich a harryin' situation !"

"I thank thee much, good Joseph," answered Edith, with a pleasant smile ; "and if it should ever be my lot again to be confined in prison, I will only ask to have as kind a person as thou art for my keeper."

CHAPTER XXXI.

LETTER TO MRS. HERMON.

"FROM one who wishes well to you and yours, come these lines. Dear lady, forgive a second intrusion, which only the deepest interest, and the most earnest desire to serve you, can excuse. You have been warned, heretofore, of a danger by which your family peace was menaced ; alas ! that danger has not passed by, but daily grows more imminent. It will soon come to your ears that she you wot of stands no longer in fear of the laws which have hitherto restrained her. And why ? Because in the depth of her designing mind she has revolved a plan whereby to evade them, and to remove from her path the obstacles which stood between her and one she is resolved to win. She has abjured the religion of her father, and declared herself to be in communion with a Church to which she knows he is warmly attached ! Further than this, she has at length prevailed upon her friends—I should say her dupes—whose influence with the Governor is great, to remove the sentence of banishment under which she lay, and to grant her free permission to remain in Bos-

son. Nevertheless, she will continue her pretended preparations to depart, as a lure to secure her object.

"I have informed you of this, in order to place you once more upon your guard; and if a mother's tears and prayers are unavailing to save your son from such a fate, a mother's command is no more than the urgency of the case will justify, nay, than it demands.

"May Heaven avert from you this great calamity, and let not your kind bosom be stung by the serpent you have warmed!"

Mrs. Hermon's feelings, upon reading this communication, may readily be imagined. If this were true, what further proof could she require of this artful girl's designs? That her son should fix his affections upon a Quaker girl was sufficiently unfortunate, but how greatly preferable that he should love and even wed such a maiden as she once believed Edith to be, than this false and designing creature who now spread her toils to entrap him!

However, she still had the comfort of his promise, which she was sure he would never violate; and she resolved that if matters should grow as stringent as they appeared to threaten, to interpose her positive command to prevent so fatal an issue.

She also hoped that motives which were so palpable would entirely disgust Louis with the object of his present admiration, for she knew there was no point

upon which he was more sensitive than that of womanly delicacy.

However, when he came in to dinner she saw with pain that something had occurred to give him unusual pleasure, for his countenance betrayed an internal satisfaction to which it had of late been a stranger. She thought it best not to appear to notice his sudden increase of spirits.

Not so Angeline, who having missed and deplored the loss of her brother's former playfulness, was delighted to see this first promise of returning enjoyment.

"Brother," she cried, "what has put you in so fine an humor? I begin to think of coaxing you into an old-fashioned romp after dinner; for my head really aches for want of a little fun!"

"Why, Angeline, have I been so morose that you did not dare to challenge me to a romp before?"

"No, not morose; but you looked so solemn, and seemed to be thinking of something so serious that I did not think you wanted to play with me."

"I did not know I was so inconsiderate of your enjoyment. But I give you leave to challenge me to any kind of a game you may wish to engage in hereafter. I will not promise always to accept your guage, but I would strain a point sometimes for your pleasure."

"Thank you very much, dear brother. I will remember your promise, perhaps better than you will fancy."

"You doubt my sincerity, do you? Well, to give you a proof of it, I hereby tender a challenge to you, and demand satisfaction in the shape of a game of 'puss in the corner,' after dinner."

"I'll let you off from a game to-day—thank you, partly because I don't think it would suit my poor head, and partly because I would rather hear what has happened to please you so much this morning!"

Her brother's face flushed at this, and looking up from his plate, he caught Henriette's eye fixed upon him with a scrutiny he would gladly have avoided. It served, however, immediately to restore his self-possession, and although he did not desire to speak at this moment on a subject so nearly interesting his feelings, he could not now avoid it without suspicion.

"Why, Angeline, I heard something this morning which will please you as much as it has myself. It concerns Edith, in whom you seem to feel so kind an interest."

Angeline dropped her knife and fork, and sat eagerly waiting for him to go on.

"Oh, I am glad indeed if you have any thing good to tell that has befallen her, for it has always been the other way with poor dear Edith!"

"The Governor has removed the sentence of banishment he pronounced upon her while her father lived, and she is as free as any of us to go or stay where she will."

"And can we go to visit her now, and can she come to see us without—without it being wrong, at least I mean, without any body blaming us for it?"

"Yes—that is, without any fear of the consequences."

"Pray, cousin," asked Henriette, "how is it? Have the Quakers obtained the King's mercy, as I hear they have been striving to do?"

"No, Henriette, not that I know of; but Edith is not a Quaker."

"Not a Quaker!" cried Angeline, with joy unfeigned.

"Not a Quaker!" echoed Henriette, in an incredulous tone.

To the great surprise of Louis, his mother said nothing; nor did her countenance express either astonishment or pleasure; but instead of either, it wore a look of extreme pain and annoyance.

"Alas," she thought, "my unknown friend was right indeed. This too certainly confirms my worst suspicions!"

"Mother, you certainly did not know of this, and yet you do not seem at all surprised at what has astonished us so greatly!"

"I heard it only this morning," Mrs. Hermon replied, coldly.

"But are you not delighted, mamma? Just to think of it; we may have Edith with us now, and see as much of her as we wish; and I will learn to sing her

sweet songs, although they are sad, and do make one feel mournful sometimes; and I will ask her to teach me to draw, which I know she will do, and so many things! Oh, it will be delightful!"

But Angeline checked herself, for she saw her mother did not look as if she thought it *would* be delightful, or in the least pleasant.

"I am glad, my dear, if Edith's views of religion are *really* changed, even though the change be so sudden as to surprise us somewhat."

"And these straight-faced Presbyterians have obtained a great victory, I suppose they consider! But pray is Edith willing to stand underneath the gallows and abjure her father's heresies, or has she already done so, and united herself with the Established Church of the colonies?"

"She is not united to the Presbyterian Church, nor does she profess communion therewith."

"Oh, then, I suppose she has no religion at all, but is ready to be made a convert of. Perhaps she might be induced to unite herself with the 'only true Church.' Would it not be worth the trying?"

"I doubt very much, Henriette, that you would be able to convert Edith to *your* religion," replied Louis, rather too quickly. "However," he added, "we may save ourselves further discussion on this subject, as she is already a member of the Church of England!"

Angeline opened her large eyes wider than ever,

and Mrs. Hermon's annoyance increased visibly, while Henriette laughed dryly, and remarked :

"Oh, then, there is nothing strange about it, after all ! It is only what I have been long expecting. Edith is a convert of the heart, and not of the head, doubtless !"

"She is not a *convert* either way," answered Louis, quietly. "It is the religion in which she was born and nurtured, and her mother died in its communion."

"Pray, then, what was her object in concealing it so long ?"

"It was on her father's account, no doubt, that she did so."

"I should ask, rather," remarked Mrs. Hermon, "what is now her object in revealing it ?" and she fixed a penetrating glance upon her son.

"I understand that such was not her intention, but that being arrested last evening, and remanded to prison for not sooner leaving the jurisdiction, she was obliged, on her own account as well as Mr. Harding's, to do so."

"But, methinks it was scarcely acting fairly and openly by her friends to keep them so long in ignorance of her real opinions, meanwhile subjecting them (as I learn their kindness to her has) to coldness and suspicion, if not to the penalties of justice."

"You mean of 'law,' my dear mother. You can not have changed your opinion on *this* point also," retorted

Louie, stung by the sarcasms that were heaped upon him. "And *you*, whose ideas of filial duty are so extraordinary, can not blame this girl for subjecting herself to suspicion, and even to persecution, rather than do what seemed a violence to her father's memory!"

"I did not know that her father's reputation stood so high in the community that it would be injured by the knowledge of his daughter being Episcopalian. Now, for my part, I should rather suppose that to be something in his favor," said Henriette.

"The world's opinion makes little difference in such a case. If others have misunderstood or misconstrued the character of a departed parent, it becomes a child to guard his memory with increased reverence. By avowing religious sentiments different from those which he was condemned for holding, his daughter doubtless felt that by some she too might be considered as ranking herself among his judges."

"And so it was the world's opinion, after all, that kept her silent!"

"Not so, but the high regard she had for his memory, and the delicate care she took that nothing on her part should seem to imply censure of his opinions, which, governing his conduct as they did, made his life and example those of a true Christian."

"Well, cousin, we are likely to have a romance out of this Quaker's daughter yet, I see! Only it is a pity, to make it more complete, that you had not been a Ro-

man Catholic, for you have already appeared as her physician, and your zealous defense of her certainly entitles you to be considered her lawyer, and since this remarkable girl can be any thing the occasion calls for, we should in the other case have seen her going over to papacy, when, in all probability, she would have chosen you as her confessor. I presume the closing act of the drama is yet to come, when you will merge these three characters into one which I need not name, as it already begins to develop itself but too plainly." And Henriette pushed her chair back from the table and left the room.

A constraint fell upon the rest of the party, and the dinner was concluded in silence. Louis was convinced now that his mother's mind was filled with prejudice and suspicion, and resolved to make one more effort to ascertain the source whence her impressions were derived. And Angeline was so puzzled for a reason why her mother and Henriette, but especially the former, did not sympathize in so great a cause of rejoicing, that it set her little head to aching violently, and feeling that perhaps her company was the cause of the restraint upon her mother and brother, and that they could not talk together as freely as if she were not by, she quietly glided from the room and resorted to her birds and her books for amusement. But the birds seemed so gay and happy and unsympathizing, and beside this, their singing wearied her as it had never done before;

and as to reading, her mind wandered so from the subject before her, that she did not retain a single word of all those over which she had been poring, and she gave it up with a sigh, and went to her box of treasures (what child is there who has not such a deposit?), and taking out each article, she inspected them one by one, and laid them in again in better order, and fitting more neatly together, than before. Here was a tiny pair of moccasins that Maretah had made, and here a withered rose, whose perfume was perceptible through all the contents of the box; this came from Edith; and here a neatly-made needle-book from the same kind hand.

She lingered over her friend's gifts with affectionate looks, and dropped a tear on the sketch which had attracted her mother's attention. But after awhile even this failed to give her pleasure, and she wandered from room to room, feeling as she had never felt before, and wondering why she was not as happy as usual. At last the forlorn child threw herself upon her bed, and was soon wrapped in a deep and heavy sleep from which she did not awaken until the chamber was darkened by the shadows of twilight, and the tea-bell announced the evening meal. At first she thought it was the morning hour, and noticing that she still had on her clothes, wondered if she had lain so all night, and forgotten to prepare for bed; but slowly and dimly the reality came back to her mind and she at-

tempted to rise, when her head became so dizzy that she was obliged to lie down again and remain quiet.

When Mrs. Hermon and her son were left alone, Louis eagerly sought the explanation which Mrs. Hermon would gladly have avoided. He was determined to know, if possible, the secret of his mother's prejudice, and to dispel the mystery by which her conduct was enveloped.

"Mother," he said, "I thought the news I brought home to-day would have given you pleasure!"

"You mean the account of the Quaker girl's conversion!"

"I mean the discovery of her real religious opinions. Mother, I have ever respected and revered your judgment—have I not?"

"Surely, my son. I never knew you dispute it until now."

"It is not your *judgment* I call in question now. But I do believe, mother, that in this case you are acting in contradiction to your usual course. You are permitting yourself to be influenced by something apart from your own judgment or observation. Will you not tell me what that something is?"

"Louis, you ask too much of me. You ask that which I can not comply with; I do not feel it best for your own sake. Nor would it make any difference with you, since you can suspect me of being unfairly influenced."

.. "Is it too much to ask an explanation of your conduct when my happiness is at stake? Why will you not be candid with me, mother? Do I conceal any thing, even my most secret thoughts, from you, and who but you taught me a principle (and I thank you for it from my very soul) by which I shall ever strive to guide my conduct—that of frankness? How often have you told me that it is a bad cause only which fears investigation!"

Mrs. Hermon felt the inclination to be plain and open—she almost resolved to be so—and then she thought, "If I tell him, if I show him these letters, it will put an end to it all, and as soon as he discovers that I have been influenced by these anonymous communications, he will never have the same confidence in me again. By doing so, I should lose what I shall never be able to regain!"

"You hesitate, mother, and now I am sure you are going to be candid with me—to be yourself once more!"

But she was not.

"I will be candid with you thus far. I *have* means of knowing her character which you can not have, and I ask you to trust me—to believe in my disinterested motives. It is to secure your happiness that I watch and pray. Is this enough to satisfy you?"

"No, mother! I believe in your sincerity and in your affection, as I do in the words of that sacred

volume, but you must not expect me to be satisfied as long as you practice a mystery; no good ever came of concealments. Tell me the grounds of your suspicions, and if you have seen ought to justify them, let me see it too. Only give me the proofs, and I promise you to look at them with an impartial eye. If you can show me good reason to doubt this girl's purity of mind and motive, I will yield; yes, even if it should destroy my confidence in all that seems good and upright!"

"Give me time to do this, my son; only give me time, and if I do not show you them, then I yield, and promise to oppose your wishes no longer!"

"But time presses! In a little while she will be gone forever, for although her sentence of banishment is removed, she still holds her purpose."

"I suspect her purpose is such as may be easily shaken!"

"Now you are ungenerous! You have me in your power, and I am without means to meet you in such a contest. But you say, 'Give me time'—time for what? To examine into her character impartially? That I will do joyfully—so that you will consent to look with your own eyes and see with your own unprejudiced vision. The objection you once urged against bringing her here is now removed; will you not reconsider my proposition to do so?"

"It is not always by watching that we can detect the true character under a disguise. It is possible to

guard the conduct so closely as to defy human skill to read the motives that lurk beneath it."

"And did you ever see any thing in her to weaken your confidence? Have you ever detected a shade of deceit—a selfish or corrupt thought? Surely you had the opportunity, if such existed."

"I did not. When she left this house, I believed her all that a pure and high-minded maiden should be. It is since that time I have changed my opinion."

"And not from observation, for you have never so much as seen her since. It must ~~must~~ be then through another. Can it be the work of that smooth-faced minister? I never liked his over-righteous way?"

"No; he was gone before. Louis, I will not be forced into telling you what my judgment pronounces unwise. I asked you to trust me: have you so little confidence left in me that you can not?"

"But, mother, as I told you before—I can not be satisfied—it is impossible as long as you deny me all just means of satisfaction. When I was a boy—a child—your word was enough for me—I never asked your reasons. But it is different now. Is it possible that—but no—I do you injustice in the thought!"

"Of what—Louis?"

"That Henriette has a hand in it. Her sarcasms are too visibly ill-natured to affect you."

"We all know poor Henriette too well for that."

What an unfortunate temper that girl has! I sometimes fear it will involve her in serious trouble!"

"Mother, I have one word more to say to you. I have used every argument that an affectionate son can use to persuade you to deal with me in this matter fairly and openly, but as yet I have failed to move you. You have my happiness in your hands. It rests with you to destroy the dearest hopes of my existence, making life no more than a routine of duty—and perhaps you have it also in your power to make it happier than I ever before knew this life could be!

"I am as yet ignorant of Edith's feelings toward me—it may be she would reject my suit—or it may be that by the use of fair means you might convince me of her unworthiness: in either of these cases, though I should suffer something—yes, much of regret and disappointment, I should not give myself up to unavailing grief or despondency, but try to bear my lot with patience, hoping for some amends from the future. But mother, if I yield to you blindly in this matter, as you require, though I should still strive to perform my duty for your sake, and guard your peace of mind from every shock—yet I will not deny that it would be to relinquish the best part of life in this world, and to look for nothing further than the satisfaction that springs from a good and pure conscience. This is

the last appeal I shall ever make to you on the subject; but beware, mother, beware lest you hesitate too long—lest you in thus doing lose the opportunity of being just to her, and for an unfounded prejudice throw away your son's happiness, in this world, forever!"

And how many mothers have thrown away their children's happiness on as slight a cause—have used their influence, too often secretly, to bring about a state of things they afterward vainly wished to remedy! How many from opposition only have thwarted the dearest wishes of the heart, and sowed the seeds of bitterness and pain where joy and harmony would have entwined. And some have done it in the worse than idle hope, born of ambition, of something higher and better in store for their dear ones than *mere* affection! These parents (stranger still!) are often the very ones who "married for love"—perhaps setting aside the authority that would have restrained *them*.

What mother with her little ones around her knee does not dream of the time coming when the "wolf, Love," shall prowl around her dear domain, seeking to devour her lambs, as it did herself and their "Grandam" before her? But what parent ever watched as *she* will watch for the enemy, and so guard her flock, that only with her consent shall her "little Red-riding-hood" bid him enter, or be attracted by

his wiles! It is true that in her own young days he "ate her all up" before her watchful mother, or even herself, suspected his design, or so much as knew him under his disguise. But what of that? Having seen him once and fallen a victim to his arts, he will never be able to deceive her again! But lo! while she dreams thus, behold the "wolf" already watching her pet lamb; and she, pretty unsuspecting innocent, bids him "pull the string and the door will fly open!" And so the "wolf, *Laurel*," goes on devouring little Red-riding-hoods to the end of time!

CHAPTER XXXII.

"ANGELINE, Angeline! why, where can the child be? Henriette, have you seen your cousin since dinner?"

"I saw her asleep in your chamber, but that was more than an hour ago."

"Ah, she is here still. What, my dear, sleeping at this time of day! Did you not hear the tea-bell ringing?"—but Angeline did not seem to hear, and her mother laid her hand upon hers to arouse her. As soon as she touched the child, she felt that she was very much heated with fever, and it needed only a look to assure her that Angeline was ill.

They used every means to avert an illness, but in vain, and in a few days she was so sick that life hung in a trembling balance. Much of the time she slept in that deep unnatural state when the spirit seems to wander so far from its frail house that we tremble lest the door of human life should close against it forever.

With anxious hearts the mother and brother watched

by her bed of pain, and prayed God to spare to them the dear child around whom seemed to center the brightness of their home.

Sometimes she opened her blue eyes, dry and glazed and languid, and smiled upon them lovingly, or thanked them in a faint voice for their kindness.

Her mother seldom left her, except when she was obliged to steal away, to relieve her o'erburdened heart, in secret tears and prayers for the young life so dear to her; and Louis, with untiring devotion, bent every thought and effort to subdue his sister's pain. Even Henriette, whose keen restless eyes were scarcely ever moistened by the gentle dew of sympathizing tears, sometimes came quietly into the chamber, and after gazing awhile on the changed face of her little cousin, turned away with a sigh, and stepped cautiously lest she should disturb her rest.

One night Louis persuaded his mother to retire and try to obtain some sleep, while he kept anxious watch by his sister's bedside. As he bent over, she opened her faded eyes, and looking up into his face with a smile, smoothed the hair from his forehead with her feverish hands.

"How very kind in you, dear brother, to sit beside me so, all through the long night!"

"Never mind, darling; I shall make you do something for me in return, as soon as you are well."

"As soon as I am well!" echoed the child, sadly,

and with a mournful glance that sent a shock of pain through his heart. "Oh, brother!"

"Yes, dear—which I hope will be soon. Do you not feel a little—a very little better to-night?"

"Perhaps I am; but my head aches badly."

"I will bathe it with this cool water, and that will refresh you."

"Oh, it feels so pleasant. But, brother, I have something I want to ask you!"

"Well, my dear, what is it?"

"Dear Louis, what *has* Edith done to displease mamma so much?"

"I do not think she has done any thing intentionally, Angie. Perhaps mamma is mistaken, and will change her mind when she knows her better."

"I am *so* glad to hear you say so; for I do want to see her very much. Do you think, brother, mamma will let her come to see me once, just once before—before I die?" She said these last words in a very low and tremulous voice.

"Don't talk so, darling! You are not so ill as that. I trust you will soon be well enough to romp with me again; and to see Edith a great many times, and enjoy her friendship without fear or interruption. But you must not talk any more now; for that will excite you and make your head worse, you know."

"But I *must* tell you, Louis, because I can not tell mamma; and something makes me feel as if I should

never have another opportunity of talking to you. I dreamed that I was going away, far away, never to come back here again; and that angels were sent to bring me with them; but I did not want to go. Then they persuaded me, and told me what a beautiful world they lived in; and that dear papa was expecting me, and had been waiting for me a long time. I told them I could not leave you and mamma; that mamma had no daughter but me to comfort her; and what do you think they said, brother? They said *Edith* would comfort her, and be a daughter to her instead of me; and that she would love you too, and make both you and mamma happy. And when I heard that I was content to go; only I asked them to let me come and tell Edith what they said, and they consented. And so it seemed to me that that was just what I was awake for now, if I only *could* see her, brother!"

Louis had some difficulty in mastering his emotion; but as soon as he had done so, he said cheerfully:

"Why, Angie, dear, don't you see you have only been dreaming? However, go to sleep now, and I will ask mamma to-morrow; and I am sure she will not object to Edith coming to see you, or to any thing else you would fancy. So if there is any thing you want, just let me know and you shall have it; for mamma would feel badly if she thought you hesitated to ask her!"

"Thank you, darling brother; you are always kind.

But if it should happen that—that I never *should* see Edith again, will you tell this dream to her for me?"

"I will; at least, I will tell *mamma*, and get her to do it; or see that it is done, at all events. So rest now, dear; I can not permit you to say another word!"

"Yes, you can; for you told me to speak if I wanted any thing, and I do. I want to tell you how much good your promise has done me; and now sing to me, brother. Sing that little hymn about heaven, that you and she used to sing together!"

Louis complied, subduing his voice so that it could scarcely be heard beyond the walls of the chamber, and sometimes forced to pause and compose his feelings.

"Oh, come away, dear spirit,
Come thou away from earth!
The joys that saints inherit
Are joys of heavenly birth.
No cloud of death or parting
Above our pathway lowers,
No tear of pain is starting
Within those radiant bowers.
"Though ties of earth may strengthen,
Though loving arms detain,
The evening shadows lengthen,
Night gathers on the plain;
The flowers thy path adorning
Shall perish 'neath his wing,
Then come thou in life's morning,
Oh hasten in thy spring
"Blest angels clad in brightness
From heaven are bending down;
They bear a robe of whiteness,
They hold a glorious crown.

"And hark! as bending nearer,
I hear them sweetly say,
'Our love than earth is dearer
Then come with us away!'
They ope the golden portal,
Its gleams around us play,
And clad in robes immortal
Our angel passed away!"

When he ceased, the child once more opened her eyes and smiled, after which she fell into an uneasy sleep, and as Louis bent over her, he breathed a silent prayer that his gentle sister should not leave them thus. "Heaven spare this lovely one to live and twine about our hearts full long! Oh, God, take not the brightness of her presence from our home!"

By morning her disease had taken the turn they dreaded. Her mind was darkened, and she spoke only as one unconscious of what was passing around her. Frequently she called upon Edith, and besought her mother to let her see her once more before she died. Mrs. Hermon now remembered with pain how she had rebuked her little daughter for so warmly espousing Edith's cause, and sent immediately to the Quaker's daughter, begging her to come without delay.

Edith was not long in complying with the request, although it had not escaped her that of late Mrs. Hermon did not seem to sympathize, as she once did, either in her joy or sorrow, and if her greeting was not as

cordial and affectionate as her once motherly tenderness might warrant Edith in expecting, she passed it by, thinking this neither the time nor occasion when she should appear to notice it.

No sooner was the sound of Edith's low voice heard in her apartment, than it attracted Angeline's attention, and she turned her face toward the direction whence it came, and listened for it to be repeated.

"Speak to her, Edith. It is possible she may recognize you."

Edith did as she was requested, and the little one replied, "Yes, yes, I know you. How kind of you to come. But I can not go away with you, because mamma is not willing."

"I do not wish to take thee away, dear child, but I will sit here beside thee, if thou desirest it, and hold thy hand, so, in mine own."

"Oh do!—that is, if mamma is willing; but does she not tell you to go away and leave me?"

"No, Angeline. She sent for me to come, and wishes me to stay as long as it pleases thee, and so I will."

"Dear mamma! And will you go with me to Heaven too? But no, you are to stay and comfort them here! Look; do you see these angels? Are they not kind to come from Heaven to watch a little girl like me?—

'Blest angels clad in brightness,
From Heaven are bending down !'

Sing it to me; for I am so weary !"

Edith sang, and soon the child slept again, holding tightly to her hand, so that she scarcely dared move for fear of disturbing her, and Mrs. Hermon turned away her face and wept.

For several days Angeline continued in this alarming condition, and the mother, already wearied with grief and anxiety, yielded her post of watcher by the bedside, for the most part, to Edith. Maretah was there, too; for she considered it her especial charge to watch over her pale sister, and when she was summoned thither, the Indian girl would not permit her to depart alone, and now she proved again a very valuable assistant. Often when Edith went to take needful rest, and the nearly exhausted mother, throwing herself down by the side of her darling, forgot her anxiety in sleep, Maretah, never weary, supplied their vacant place. Her dark eyes were ever on the alert. Her usual seat was on the floor by the foot of the bed, where she watched the countenance of each one in attendance, seeming to anticipate their wishes, and by her keen perception and rapid though noiseless movements, saved them many a weary step, and greatly lightened the burden of their anxious vigils.

One day when Edith sat there alone, the child suddenly fixed her eyes upon her with less of vacancy than

usual, and seeming to struggle with consciousness, she said, reproachfully, "Oh, Edith, what wrong is it you have done?"

Her tone was so natural that Edith was almost deceived into thinking she spoke rationally.

"What wrong? Many wrong things, I fear, my child!" she answered, rather reflectively than in reply to the question.

"Oh no, not many. But I did not think you would offend mamma; because she used to love you so, and she does not now. No; and it must have been something very bad, I am sure!"

"I am sorry, my dear. But it was nothing intentional, at least!"

"Then tell mamma you are sorry; oh do! and we shall all be happy once more; for brother loves you, and so do I—but Henriette, ah, poor Henriette!" and she shook her head sadly.

She seemed to become excited; and thinking to soothe her, Edith commenced murmuring in a low voice one of her favorite songs.

"They are the angels coming back! hark; do you not hear them? *They* love us always, even when we are wrong; they are so good and beautiful. But you, Edith, it was not kind of you, indeed!" Thus she continued until she fell asleep again, and Edith would not have given a thought to what she said, except that having noticed Mrs. Hermon's coldness, she suspected

that Angeline's remarks were not entirely owing to the visions of a disordered mind.

"How selfish and wrong I am to give it any attention. It shall not disturb me again, for I will banish it from my mind altogether!"

But for all that, it kept intruding again, and again, paining her sensitive nature. "What wrong have you done?" and "brother loves you!"

"Alas! what *have* I done?—'Brother loves you!' Is this the secret of it all? Why did I ever come here to bring nothing but sorrow? But I will go! yes, I will soon go where they shall never hear of me again, and then he will forget—and I!"

What of thee, poor patient sufferer? Thou wilt hide thy secret in thy own wounded heart, and pursue thy weary pilgrimage as many an one hath done, bearing an arrow in thy bleeding bosom!

When Mrs. Hermon returned to the room, she found Edith's head pillowed near her own darling's, their hands clasped in each other's, and both sleeping quietly. But on the faces of one were traces of tears, and a sigh occasionally struggled from her seemingly troubled breast. Again she was struck with a resemblance between that sad face and the sketch she had seen in the hands of Angeline; and the old association recurred, which she had so long been unable to trace; connected as it was with her younger days, it led her back far along the path of the checkered past; and while she

gazed, the spell seemed once again to bind her, and she longed to take the motherless one to her heart, and say : " Grieve no more : here will I cherish thee !"

Touched by her affectionate devotion to her little one, Mrs. Hermon now began to reflect upon her late treatment of the almost unfriended orphan with some self-reproach. " Is it possible that I have all this time been doing her wrong, blinded by a cruel prejudice, and that too through one who dares not make his charges openly and in the light of day ?" Then turning to the sweet faded flower that lay withering before her, she started as the thought crossed her mind— " who can tell but this is my punishment ! Perhaps God has brought this upon me in correction of my fault !" And in her turn she sought to banish the intrusive thoughts from her mind, but vainly ; and finally determined that if she had been unjust, she would be so no longer. She would comply with her son's earnest wish, and discern for herself the truth or the falsehood of these secret accusations. With this resolution came a more comfortable state of mind than she had experienced for a long time—in fact since she had first entertained these suspicions. " It was wrong, I see now ; but with God's help I will try to remedy the error !"

And where was Henriette all this time ? She felt as one useless and forgotten. The place that should be hers was usurped by another ; and if she now came at

all into the sick room, it was when she heard her cousin's footsteps there, and she came to watch him. She saw him cast many a look of tender gratitude upon her whom she considered her rival, and heard him often remonstrate against her too constant and earnest watchings; and she also saw that her aunt's kind manner had returned. But closely as she eyed Edith's pensive countenance, to detect one stray or accidental glance that would tell a tale of tenderness toward him, or scrutinized her conduct for an unguarded act or sign calculated to attract him—she failed. There was no secret in her eyes or manner, but a sadness, or rather a prevailing quiet, undisturbed by passions such as raged within her own unhappy heart. It was like the mist that broods over the still autumnal landscape, softening the beauty which it does not hide.

Had not Henriette been so absorbed by other feelings, she would have grieved over the condition of her little cousin; for cold and unanswering as her nature was, even *she* could not live in the same atmosphere with a child so gentle and loving, and remain altogether untouched. It was not Angeline, pale and wasted—perhaps dying—that she saw in that chamber. It was a rival beloved and admired, stealing the hearts of all away from her; and with art too consummate for detection, gradually accomplishing her victory.

And if Edith's face were, so to speak, a mild and sad, though placid landscape, Henriette's was a scene

of wild and stormy tumult—of whirlwind rage, that tore and scattered from its path each gentle feeling.

But in that solemn chamber, where angels full of love and pity hovered, and human hearts grew faint and still with fear, no eye saw the storm that raged in Henriette's bosom, save the ever-watchful one of the faithful Indian girl.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

It was the midnight hour, and throughout the house reigned a stillness such as they only know who have watched by the bed-side of one who sleeps a sleep from which he may never awaken. It was not the peaceful silence that wraps itself about the home where loving hearts, folded in sweet dreams, repose. Nor was it the peaceful quiet of the death hour, when grief itself is hushed in its intensity. It was a silence that each trembled to break, for life fluttered fearfully within its caged dwelling. Fond eyes kept vigil, holding back their very tears, and hearts almost seemed to cease their beating, lest their motion should affright the trembling soul, and send it soaring forever beyond the bound of its frail prison-house.

Thus, Mrs. Hermon and her son together watched the flickering spark of life that lingered in the bosom of the sleeping child.

Edith, yielding to their entreaties, had thrown herself upon her bed to obtain a short repose. Exhausted by long watching, she scarcely touched the pillow when she slept heavily. Maretah lay upon

a low couch at her feet. It was the Indian girl's habit always when she slept to hold her dagger in her hand, thus arming herself against Magawan's avengers. The weapon now lay on the pillow beside her, glittering in the moonlight that streamed through the open window. Her thoughts were busy among the scenes of her past life. Again she trod the forest path, again she chanted a welcome to the braves. Once more she was a child kneeling in her father's wigwam at her Albert's feet, her hands crossed upon his knees, and her eyes drinking in the language of his eloquent face before she had learned by words to comprehend his meaning. Again she saw him bound to the fatal stake, and shrunk affrighted from the sight of death. Then she was a fugitive, and the cry of her pursuers on her path. And now she sees Magawan's eyes glaring on her with exulting joy.

But what shadow is that intercepting the moonlight, what figure steals noiselessly across the room? Why comes it in that still midnight hour, and with the action of an enemy? The figure bends over the pillow of the Indian girl, and seems to listen—its breath steals serpent-like across her cheek. Yes, she sleeps! Cautiously, and with a cat-like movement, it clutches at the dagger. Ah, this is well. The golden opportunity is all its own!

Who art thou, dark intruder on the dreams of innocence? What purpose moves thee to come steal-

ing thus upon them? Is it indeed to avenge the red man's blood that the same dagger that drank the purple stream of *his* life, shall be dipped in that of her, the injured and undisciplined one o'er whom thou now art bending?

But no! the shadow lurks there only a moment, and then darkly moves to where the orphan lies, happy in visions that exist for her, on earth, no longer; of a home and dear affections.

How canst thou slumber thus when the hand is raised to take thy young life from thee? Will no protecting angel hovering near, warn thee of threatening danger, or is this to be the end of all thy patient suffering, and has fate no rich reward in store for one who has endured her buffetings so nobly? Alas, she still sleeps on, and all unconscious, smiles at the delusions of her pleased fancy!

But now the arm is raised to strike the deadly blow—it gathers its strength for the action—the glittering point descends! A fearful shriek echoes through the hushed dwelling. The sleeper starts from her dreams of peace and gazes around her wildly.

The sound was heard in the sick chamber, and the startled watchers looked on each other in dismay. The child seemed to hear it too, for she moved uneasily, and grasped her mother's hand with convulsive energy.

Mrs. Hermon sat still, pale and powerless, and motioning to her to remain quiet, Louis arose, and fol-

lowing the direction of the sound, was seen in Edith's chamber. What was his surprise at the sight that greeted him! There stood the Indian girl, holding Henriette in an iron grasp with one hand, while with the other she raised her dagger in the air, pointed at his cousin's heart. His first impulse was to rush forward and rescue Henriette from her hands.

"Oh, save me! save me! She will murder me!" cried Henriette.

"What means this scene?" he asked, first of Edith, who was incapable of answering him, and then at his cousin, who began to speak rapidly and eagerly.

"Oh, cousin, I heard a noise, and thinking something was wrong, came in hither, and to my great terror what should I see but this girl standing over Edith, who was sleeping, with her dagger raised, ready to plunge it into her bosom. I sprang forward, when she seized me, and would have murdered me if you had not come in at that very moment!" and Henriette began to wring her hands and cry.

"Liar!" was all Maretah deigned to say.

Louis closed the door, to prevent the sounds from reaching his sister's chamber, and, turning to Edith, desired her to explain.

"I know nothing," she answered. "I was awakened by a shriek, and saw only what thou also saw. But in justice to Maretah, I must say that I do not credit Henriette's story!"

Maretah answered this only by taking Edith's hand in hers, and pressing it to her bosom, regarding her, the while, with looks of grateful pleasure.

"And what has Maretah to say?" asked the young man. She looked for a signal from Edith before replying, and then said :

"Yon treacherous maiden stole in hither in the midnight silence. Why did she come. Ask her! She thought Maretah slept; but the Indian never sleeps when danger lurks near her sister's pillow! She listened for Maretah's breath, and it deceived her. This" (raising the dagger) "was on my pillow. Had sleep bound me, only death could have torn it from my hand! She seized it, and like the panther stealing on its prey, she crept to my sister's bedside. Her hand was raised to strike, when, with a spring, mine was upon her. Only for what the pale-face has told me, she would now lie there in death! It was that held back my hand—and Maretah scorns a mean revenge! She would not stain her hand with the blood of a girl—a coward!"

It is not probable that Henriette would have permitted the girl to tell her story without interruption if she had not been both surprised and alarmed to learn that instead of being asleep as she supposed, Maretah had watched her motions. Beside this, she had been so transported by her evil passions that her dark intention never appeared to her in all its terror

until she heard her movements thus described by the Indian girl.

"Can this indeed be possible?" exclaimed Louis, regarding her with horror and aversion, and fixing his glance of scrutiny upon her countenance.

"No doubt you will believe this artful story! Oh yes, you are ready to believe any thing of me! But I will see if we are to have our lives endangered in this way by savages—if wild Indians with daggers in their girdles, are to come into our houses and threaten us thus. And if I am deserted by those who should protect me, I will appeal to them who have power to avenge such injuries!"

"I entreat you to let this matter rest now—remember Angeline!" pleaded Edith.

"You are right! but it shall be looked to in the morning. Come Henriette!" he said, pointing the way to her own chamber.

"And will you leave her here with that girl again? Edith, you are a fool, or else you set no value on your life!"

"I have nothing to fear," answered Edith, quietly; while Louis led the guilty girl away, and opening her door, only said, "Henriette, I know you. Beware!" Then locking her in, and putting the key into his pocket, he returned to his sister's bedside.

Mrs. Hermon was so wrapt in her own grief and anxiety, that it required very little to satisfy the look

of inquiry with which she met his eye, and soon all recollection of that startling sound which had disturbed them was lost in maternal apprehension.

For some time Louis heard his cousin moving about her chamber. Sometimes she paced the floor, then for awhile was silent, after which he thought she drew some heavy object across the room toward the door, and all was quiet.

When the first light of morning came it did not bring the hope which they had waited for so long. Angeline's few murmured words still betrayed a wandering mind, and it was with anguish too deep for tears, that the sorrowing mother bent over her and cried, "Oh, my daughter, my precious little one, must I indeed lose thee? Must I resign thee so soon to Him who gave thee to our love!"

CHAPTER XXXIV.

WHEN Henriette heard the key of her chamber turned upon her, and was left to her reflections, she was struck for the first time with the magnitude of the crime, from the commission of which an accident had saved her, and experienced a sense of profound relief in thinking she was not quite a murderess.

In fact, great as her crime was, it had not the sin of premeditation. It happened that in passing Edith's door, on her way to her room, after visiting that of her cousin, she caught sight of Maretah's dagger as it lay glittering in the moonlight on her pillow. Then all the evil of Henriette's nature was aroused, and the intention darted through the mind with the rapidity of light. She paused not to consider the consequences of her violence, for she easily persuaded herself that it would be no difficult matter to fix the deed upon the Indian girl, to whom the dagger belonged, and in case of failure there was one resource always at her command. Indeed she scarcely thought at all upon the subject, for she hated Edith with a bitterness that almost deprived her of her reason, and her principal idea was revenge.

“What would I have made myself?” and Henriette shuddered as the word “murderess” answered her thought. “And how much better am I in their eyes even now? ‘To-morrow it shall be looked to!’—To-morrow! But I will disappoint them of that!

“Fool that I was to think it could succeed, and yet if I had been one moment quicker! Curses on that lynx-eyed, cunning girl, even *she* scorned me, and called me ‘coward!’

“There is not one in all this whole wide world who does not despise me; not one! They all did before this happened; and now I shall be like another Cain, hated, and contemned, and feared by every one.

“This Quaker girl will have her revenge on me, too, for the dislike I have always shown her, and now her time has come to triumph over me. She has told him all I said to her, too; for did he not say he knew me? That glance of his; how *dare* he look at me so! and ‘To-morrow it shall be looked to;’ it has come to threats then, has it!

“Who knows but to-morrow I shall be in that very place I taunted Edith for going to—the jail, and may be in the very cell she occupied? And what will they do to me?—hang me, possibly, and all the town will run to see the sight, and boys will pelt me with mud and stones, and curse me, and call me, ‘hunch-back,’ as that little wretch did the day I went to see the Quakers hung and so enjoyed the sight; only I

was so sorry it had not been that old man and his precious daughter, instead of the others! I paid the boy for his compliment, too, with that long needle which I ran into his arm; ha, ha, he'll know the hunch-back next time!"

Such were Henriette's thoughts as her cousin heard her pacing her chamber floor, with a dark purpose lurking in her heart. Perhaps, now that the time had come for executing it, she shrunk from it with a fear she would not acknowledge. And so she continued to walk and commune with herself, but not one prayer of repentance, not one hope of heavenly or earthly pardon lent her its pitying strength! Had *she* ever felt forgiveness, or buried in oblivion the remembrance of even one unintentional injury? No, nor did it once occur to the vindictive girl, that another might—that even a merciful God would receive and forgive the penitent!

"But why do I hesitate? This is only loss of time, and I know not how soon they may come to take me away. It must be nearly morning; the time goes rapidly. It is nothing to die, after all: only to bid good-by to vexation and misery. Better the eternal sleep of death, than life, as I live! What am I now? despised and hated; and when I am dead perhaps they will judge of me less harshly."

Her resolution was now taken. She drew the heavy piece of furniture, before spoken of, against the door. It required all her strength to move it. She then

placed the candle on a chair by her bedside, took a small penknife in her hand and lay down, after which she bared her arm and looked to see which vein she should open.

"Fool that I am to tremble—it is nothing. Think of the disgrace that awaits thee; think of her, beloved, happy, honored, and of thyself, despised, hated, miserable, and then choose between such a life and death, which is the end of all things! Pahaw, there is no choice!"

Another moment and the ruddy stream started from her arm. She turned her head away, for she felt a sickening faintness at the sight of blood, her own life-stream flowing from her veins! For a little while she lay still, but fear, which she mistook for the faintness of death, startled her as it seemed to fall like a cold weight upon her heart.

"Shall I indeed die? Is death really so near, and whither am I going? Can there be, after all, another world beyond this, where spirits live and dwell? Is there indeed a God who can forgive and pity? No; I do not believe it! There may be one for those who are happy, but not for such as I am, else why has He left me thus, and never shown the love to me that they say he feels toward all? What has He ever done for me to convince me of His kindness?—Nothing. And now I suppose they would say I should pray to Him! Why should I? I have lived without Him. He might

have made me happy, if He is the good father they tell of, instead of sending me into the world an object of disgust and aversion! And now I can die without him. Die! How different from Angeline! There they are, watching every breath she draws, weeping and grieving over her, and here am I, left to die alone like a beggar!" She started up in bed, and a death-like faintness now indeed came over her. The candle flickering in its socket, showed her by its sudden starts of light, her bed, together with her own garments, soaked with blood. She tried to scream, but her voice failed her; she could not utter a sound. Then she listened, hoping some one, even Edith, might be passing by, but all was fearfully silent. She heard only a strange ringing in her ears, and felt the fluttering of her failing pulse. The candle now sent up one last flickering beam, and she was left in darkness, and the wretched girl could only think the word she had not voice to utter—"mercy!" and sink back upon her bed insensible.

At an early hour Edith came to take her place by Angeline. She was very pale, and her aspect denoted extreme weariness. Mrs. Hermon, struck by her appearance, was alarmed, because she feared she was ill, and kindly bade her go back to bed and rest longer, as she did not seem to be much refreshed by sleep. They were almost the first words that Mrs. Hermon addressed.

to her in the old motherly tone, and brought the tears into Edith's eyes, as she thanked her, but declared herself ready to resume her post, and persuaded the almost heart-broken mother to retire. After she was gone, she said, looking at Louis anxiously : "Do you not fear she may do herself some violence?"

"You are right. I should have thought of that!"

He informed his mother of the event of the night as gently as he could. The shock was great, but not as much so as it would have been, had not other grief occupied her mind.

"Alas! what can we do? and at this moment. Why must it have come now?"

Louis gave her the key of Henriette's chamber, and desired her to see if all were right there. She unlocked the door; but something from within opposed her entrance. He now remembered the sounds he had heard during the night; and it was with a feeling of fearful apprehension, that, after calling repeatedly upon his cousin, and receiving no answer, he proceeded to apply the force of his strength to effect an entrance into her chamber. He had only partially succeeded in pushing through the narrow passage thus obtained, when he started back, with a look of horror pictured upon his face.

"What, what is it, Louis? oh, speak; what saw you?"

"Do not come here, mother," he answered, motioning her away. "Do not, I beseech you; nay, for once I must command; you must not, you shall not!" And Mrs. Hermon, beginning to suspect the truth, allowed herself to be led away. She did not again ask what he saw, but gazed into his face with an expression of bewildered alarm, and suffered him to place her upon a seat.

"Remain here a moment, dear mother, until I return."

She sat perfectly quiet, with her hands clasped together, not attempting to move, while he returned to ascertain if the vital spark had flown. To his great joy he found that life still remained; and as the blood was yet slowly trickling from the vein, he closed it, hastily winding his handkerchief around the arm, and hurried back to tell his mother the result of his investigations.

"Mother do not look so! Henriette has been rash indeed; but thank God it is not too late to restore her! Nay, I will not accept your assistance. Send Maretah hither; she is used to sights like this—and go you and calm yourself; all will be well enough soon."

It was not long before the restoratives they administered had their effect. Henriette looked around bewildered; and seeing her cousin bending over her, and another form retreating behind the curtain (for the Indian thought she might not like to fix her eyes upon

her, on first reviving), she inquired, in a faint voice, what it meant.

Louis bade her remain quiet, in a tone at once kind and grave; but when she attempted to move, and found herself powerless, her eye fell by chance upon the bandage on her arm, and all at once the truth of her situation flashed upon her.

"Why did you come in? what brought you here?" she said, almost angrily.

"Thank God, I came in time, in time to prevent the fatal consequences of your rashness!"

"And I thank you not!" she retorted, turning her face the other way.

"The day will come when you will! but it matters not now. I can not leave you alone, Henriette, and I must go to Angeline."

"Why can you not leave me alone? I would wish to be so," she said, in a somewhat softened tone.

"Simply because I will not! Do you wish therefore that I should send my mother to you?"

"For heaven's sake, no! Who is that behind the curtain?"

"It is Maretah, who assisted me in restoring you."

The Indian girl now came forward and said:

"Maretah will watch her if the maiden wills it."

Henriette hesitated; but reflecting that she could not endure the eyes of either her aunt or Edith upon her—and there was no one else who could be sum-

moned; and besides, there was something in the bold character of the forest girl that excited her admiration—she said:

“Let her stay.”

CHAPTER XXXV.

MEANWHILE Edith was left alone with her little charge, and while anxiously watching her she was startled at seeing that a gradual change was coming over the pallid face of the sleeping child. Her restless movements ceased, her breathing became regular, while Edith's excitement increased in proportion as that of Angeline appeared to diminish, until her own breath was almost suspended in the intensity of her feelings. The dawning hope was, however, darkened by the cloud of fear with which it came accompanied, that this might be the change that often precedes that greater and most awful one, at the name of which we tremble. But as she bent nearer and nearer, and saw with indescribable joy, that Angeline began to look more and more like her own sweet self, the blue eyes opened, and gazed into her own with silent wonder.

There was no longer the wild gleam of fever in those now languid orbs, for soon a smile of recognition parted her lips, and she whispered in a voice so faint and low as to be scarcely audible, and with the surprise of one conscious for the first time of her presence, "Dear

Edith!" then, as if exhausted by so great an effort, once more fell into a calm and quiet slumber.

When Louis returned with noiseless caution to that room where the blessing of a merciful Father had fallen, it was to find the Quaker's daughter kneeling by his sister's bed, with tears of silent joy streaming from eyes lifted in gratitude to Heaven.

At a sign from him she stole away to bear the joyful tidings to the almost despairing mother. She found Mrs. Hermon lying exhausted upon her bed. Bursting into tears, she hastened to her side, and taking one of her passive hands in her's, exclaimed, "Thank God, He is indeed merciful!"

"Thank God, indeed," she answered, calmly, "Henriette's sinful purpose of self-destruction is defeated, and I am truly grateful, my child, that His hand interposed to save you from her evil passion!"

Edith was, as yet, ignorant of Henriette's attempt upon her own miserable life, and only imperfectly understood Mrs. Hermon's meaning.

"Alas! has she been so rash, so bold? But it is not of her I come to speak. I have hastened to bring thee other and more blessed tidings!"

"God's will be done! since he has thus seen fit to visit me!"

Edith saw it was necessary to use caution in imparting her glad message. She continued—

"Nay, He is merciful in this also!"

"Yes, yes. I know it, I feel it, and oh, I trust in Him for strength to bear up and endure."

"What do I say to mislead thee thus? The child of thy love is not taken from thee, from her earthly home!"

"Oh, Edith, speak, I conjure you! What is your meaning? I thought you came to tell me she was gone! Dare I dream that it is otherwise?"

"I trust it may be. At least thou mayest hope that she will yet be spared to thee!"

"Do not bid me hope too far; it is a fearful thing to deceive one's self thus. Beware, maiden, how you speak of hope!"

"But thou hast a warrant for it now. There is a promise from above written on the sweet child's face."

The mother's agitation was so great that for a long time Edith did not succeed in calming her. She had prepared herself to bear the loss of her child, but not her restoration; for that was a subject upon which she had almost ceased to dwell. She now wept and laughed by turns, and made Edith again and again describe the change as she saw it taking place, and clasped her in her arms, warmly pouring out her gratitude for the love and devotion she had shown her little one.

"Name it not, for it is less than nothing! Thy kindness and that of thy son to me, and to him who has gone to his rest, have been too great almost for me to bear. Never may I think to repay it, but He will, and if fervent prayers can invoke a blessing, surely one must rest on you now and forever!"

CHAPTER XXXVI.

HENRIETTE lay upon her couch weak and languid, the life she had so nearly thrown away, or rather made forever wretched, feebly fluttering within her restless bosom. It was the first time she ever remembered feeling ill, and it made her more a child than she would have believed any thing could do.

There was only one thought that prevented her regretting the fortunate issue of the attempt against her own life—which was, that she remembered the agony of mind attending what she fancied her last moments, too vividly for it to have yet lost its influence; indeed the impression was destined to be fortunate and lasting.

Yet her evil nature, though weakened, was by no means conquered, and her bitterness toward Edith increased rather than diminished, from the consciousness of being in her power. How she would use that power, Henriette little doubted, for judging all hearts by her own, she believed it impossible to forgive. She therefore busily devised means for eluding the just punishment of her intended crime, and thought

at last that she had hit upon a plan. But for the fear of failure she would now have been tolerably at ease, amused, and with her imagination excited as it was by the romance of Maretah's character. The Indian girl well knew how to charm her with recitals of her past experience, and it was Henriette's delight to listen to her wild and quaintly told legends.

Perhaps Maretah could the more readily forgive the characteristic violence of the other, because it was not altogether foreign to her own nature. Instinctively comprehending the secret of Henriette's hatred to her adopted sister, and accustomed to a mode of summary revenge, it did not seem so culpable to her as it must have appeared to another. Then too, a conscious superiority led Maretah to regard her with pity rather than anger, for to her, Henriette was no more than a weak and wayward child. And so she sat beside her day by day amusing her so well as scarcely to betray that she was watching every movement, and prepared to defeat any further attempt at her former violence.

One day, shortly after the occurrences we have mentioned, there came a gentle tap on Henriette's door. It was answered by Maretah, who in obedience to a sign from Edith, remained outside (though not so far as to lose sight of her charge), while the latter entered.

"How fares it with thee, Henriette?" she asked kindly; but Henriette, turning herself away, refused

to acknowledge her presence. "She has come to triumph over me, as well she may, though it shall not be for long!" thought the vindictive girl.

"Forgive this intrusion. I came in without asking permission because I feared thou wouldst deny me, and I desire to ask a favor at thy hand."

Still no answer, except in thought. "A favor! that is something new for any one to ask of me. They all know too well that I am not fond of granting them. No doubt she made a mistake, and means that she has come to give me the opportunity of asking one of her, but she is mistaken there also!"

"Henriette, I see thou art displeased with my visit, but still I must persist in annoying thee so far as to request that for both our sakes thou wilt preserve silence on the subject of yesternight's occurrences. For my own part, be assured that I shall speak of them to no one, and further than that, I shall endeavor to banish even the recollection of them from my mind. For Maretah's secrecy also I can answer. Thy aunt and cousin may no doubt be relied on—and it only remains with thee to bury their remembrance in oblivion."

"You can not be sincere!" was Henriette's involuntary exclamation, as she turned about and looked Edith in the face for the first time.

"I most certainly am, and that for my own sake as well as thine!"

"For *your* sake? what harm could it do *you* to speak of it? but I see now." And the suspicious creature once more turned away and continued in thought—"another trick to entrap my cousin and purchase favor of the family!"

"What dost thou see Henriette?" asked Edith, as she marked the cold wary look returning; but again she received no reply.

"I would press this on thy attention, because, as thou knowest, the magistrates of this goodly place are so prompt in the performance of what they regard their duty, that if a breath of it should reach their ears, they might feel impelled to make inquiries as painful to myself as to thee. This is what I came to tell thee, and will only add that I sincerely rejoice to see thee in a fair way of recovery."

"Well," thought Henriette, after she was gone, "there is truth in what she says, if one might rely upon her promise; and I believe one may! However, I shall get out of the way, in case she changes her mind; for either she is a fool, or else fancies she has something to gain by such a course. If *I* had *her* in my power thus, how differently I should act, and what delight it would be to triumph over her!"

But after this visit, instead of being more comfortable in her mind, because relieved of the fear of prosecution, Henriette was less so than before. She turned and tossed uneasily upon her bed, and cared little for

Maretah's entertainments—in fact, was a burden to herself, and really began to think she might be happier if she had more of the disposition which *seemed* to actuate the Quaker's daughter.

On the following day Edith came again to her door, and asked permission to come in. Henriette hesitated, wondering what she could have to say now, and finally decided to admit her, just to gratify her curiosity. Thus she continued to repeat her visits for several successive days, until once when it happened that the accustomed hour passed by without bringing her, her old enemy grew restless and impatient, and marveled why she did not come. “Not that she really wanted to see her, or in the least enjoyed her society; oh, no! but having so few amusements now, she missed even the trifling one that Edith's conversation afforded her!”

* * * * *

“And so you really intend to go to England!”

“I never have had any other thought. Alice persuaded me to stay until after her marriage, or we should have gone some time ago.”

“You are a strange creature, Edith; I wish I really knew how to understand you!”

Edith laughed. “Am I such a mystery? Nay, Henriette, I might retort that same remark against thee. But indeed thou art making a riddle of me when I am none at all; for just as I appear, I am; and ‘he who runs may read.’”

"Then you think me a strange creature, do you? Come now, let us agree each to tell the other her opinion of her! It will be amusing; and I quite fancy the idea!"

"I will accede to it; but come thou first, and let me hear what an enormity I look like in thine eyes!"

"And you will promise not to be angry?"

"Certainly, and exact the same pledge of thyself."

"Agreed! To tell you truly, Edith, I am not quite decided about your character. There are two opinions in my mind; and sometimes I hold one, sometimes the other.

"The first is, that you are what people call a Christian—(don't think that a compliment, however, for I never once fancied such); that you have no very strong passions to influence your conduct; and therefore it is an easy matter for you to guide it by the rule and measure that *people again call*—goodness. It costs you nothing, and you deserve no credit for it. That is the first—now for the other character.

"You are altogether a deception; you appear to be what I have described, while you are nothing of the kind; but your powers of dissimulation are so perfect as to defy detection by the most watchful eye. Do you remember one night when I succeeded in making you angry? Well, since that time I have considered you worthy of being my enemy; for then I thought I discerned a flash of your real character. I was not certain

before that you had any; and I tell you candidly that I rather incline now, to place you under the second order. Now I have been frank with you; come, let me see myself at full length in your mirror!"

"Thou hast not given me a very flattering view of myself, it is true; but it shall not influence me in my sketch of thee.

"I think thou started in life with a wrong idea, and hast ever since been governing thy conduct thereby. That wrong idea is a depreciation of thyself."

"Are you crazed? but I forgot I must not interrupt you; so go on, but mind you are candid if you would not rouse my wrath!"

"I repeat it—a depreciation of thyself. It has led thee to dislike and suspect every one and to take their indifference to thee as a matter of course; it engenders jealousy. 'Nobody loves *me*.' 'Nobody cares for *me*.' 'What claims have *I* on others?' Such is thy continual self-communion. I look on it as the parent of thy other faults, but must say that the children far exceed their ancestor. Shall I go on?"

"By all means! I am interested, and begin to think you are sincere. Now for the unlucky progeny."

"This idea engenders malice. Thou hast choked the growth of kindly feelings—torn them from thy heart as thou shouldst have torn the evil, which thou hast industriously cultivated. Thou hast hidden every good impulse, and displayed every wrong one, thus

making it thy study to appear worse than thou art. This leads thee to doubt every one, to question every motive that appeared pure in another, until even the very source of goodness and purity seems polluted to thy vision. What wonder when thou deniest the evidence of good in thyself that thou shouldst question it elsewhere?

"Henriette thou art making thy whole life a falsehood—with both paths before thee, ever leaving the straight one and pursuing the labyrinthine maze! Yet, strange to say, thou art all the while deceiving thyself with the idea that thou art sincere, simply because professing no good; thou art giving no ground for good opinion, forgetting that falsehood exists wherever the conduct is deceptive, as well as where the growth of nature is checked and distorted by its presence."

"Have you finished?"

"Yes, and I have been candid enough to expect the fulfillment of thy promise."

"O! I am not in the least angry, on the contrary, although according to your picture, I am worse than I fancied, I like myself better than ever before; but let me see, what is it? The first fault was humility—was it not?"

"Not at all. Humility is something vastly different. Self-depreciation *may* be converted into it, to be sure, but it has not in thy case led in that direction."

"Well then, malicious; you said I was malicious, at any rate?"

"In terms more plain than polite—yes."

"Away with politeness! If you get to that, I *shall* be angry. Come—'malice'—'suspicion'—but stop; these are the children, I forget the respected parent. We'll start anew," (counting on her fingers.) "Self-depreciation, malice, suspicion, jealousy—four. The other surprises me a little, I must reflect upon it at my leisure; but pray, how do you know that I pride myself upon sincerity? These can not be all my faults—and yet they are enough at a time. But after you have given me such a character, what better can you expect of me?"

"Every thing. There is not one of these faults that could not be turned the other way and made a virtue. With all characters the case would not be so hopeful, though with thine, the resolution once formed, success is almost certain."

"What is there in *my* character, especially, to make it so?"

"Force, strength, energy. Didst thou ever bend thy mind to any purpose and fail therein from weakness, merely?"

"Not that I am aware of. But you have told me so many strange things about myself to-day, that I am scarcely confident of any thing. I *think*, however, that there is something within me—be it good or evil—that perseveres toward accomplishing an end, and impels me to persist, sometimes after all chance of success is over."

"That is it, exactly ; and an excellent trait, if properly directed : though, like every other good one, capable of being wrongly applied."

"You spoke of turning my particular faults into virtues. Come now, just for the humor of it, tell me how it could be done so easily."

"To begin with the first—malice. I would drive it unceremoniously out the door, and good-will would soon occupy the vacant place, uninvited. Secondly—suspicion. Believe the best of every one ; question no motive that appears sincere until the proof of its falsity is before thy eyes. This will soon give thee confidence, first in little things, then in greater, until a firm belief in the great principle of truth is established, then make that a guide of the conduct, and falsehood can not possibly have a foothold in the character."

"Very good ; but it seems to me you have omitted the most difficult of all—humility."

"Thou art right ; it is not easy to be humble. Let me see ! Instead of feeling, 'What claims have I on the love and sympathy of my kind,' rather think 'I am indeed poor and dependent, unworthy what I desire to obtain, and yet my nature demands it : I am so constituted that I can not be happy without it. What has made me so ? The hand of Him who framed me and all creatures from the same dust, who planted in our hearts these everlasting longings—tokens of a better life to come. Would he have made me thirsty without

giving me the means of satisfying the want? No, it is inconsistent with His divine character. With this necessity in myself, he has also given me the power to minister to others, and so long as I withhold their just portion which is in my hands, how can I demand mine own which is in theirs? Knowing mine own need, I also know how great is that of my brother. I will begin by giving—sowing my mite in the hearts of others and reaping in return a store of benefits. By giving and receiving, by mutual dependence, we learn to love.”

Henriette made no answer to this, but seemed lost in reflection, and Edith, secretly rejoicing at so favorable a result of their conversation, thought it best to say no more now, and therefore left her.

“If I could only be sure of her intention to go to England, I might do it!” said Henriette, upon finding herself once more alone.

Angeline was improving rapidly. Alice was to be married the week following, immediately after which Edith expected to bid adieu to the shores where so much had occurred that must live forever in her memory. Alice, impatient of her long absence, yet hopeful of the result of her second sojourn in Mrs. Hermon's family, now claimed her presence and assistance. Again and again, Mrs. Hermon affectionately urged her to remain with them longer, or at least to *defer* her projected journey; but firmly and gently Edith adhered to her purpose, and persisted in making preparations for her

departure. Once more she visited Henriette, to bid her farewell.

"To-day! You are not really going to leave us to-day?—but you will be back often, and I—that is, Angeline—will see you again."

"I think not. Our ship will sail next week, and I shall be closely occupied with Alice's affairs and my own until the last moment."

"Is there a vessel sails for England next week?" asked Henriette, with an appearance of unusual interest.

"There is; and my kind friend, Mr. Harding, has secured our passages therein, and fortunately found a friend of his own, whose kindness we may tax occasionally during the voyage."

"Then your passage is taken! Edith, do you know I never believed you really meant to go?"

Edith smiled, though sadly, to be sure, and Henriette, closely watching her countenance, continued—

"Could *no one* persuade you to remain?"

Edith met her gaze with a calm, truth-telling face.

"No, Henriette; not one."

"And are you going all that way just to take care of an unreasonable old woman, who, for any thing you know, may only take delight in making you miserable, when there are so many who want you here, where you could be happy?"

"I am going to my aunt, who, I trust, is not so un-

reasonable as to disregard my comfort entirely, though, even if I knew she were, I should feel just as much obliged to go?"

"The more fool you would be for it! So would not I. Have you no other reason? or, perhaps, you really want to go?"

"I have reasons both ways; though, to speak candidly, I do not want to go."

"And suppose your aunt were to die, what then?"

"Alas, I know not! I should look to Heaven to raise me up another friend."

"Heaven would be very apt to disappoint you; but I mean, what if your aunt were dead already?"

"God forbid! Henriette, thou hast a fruitful imagination. It is enough to act in the present—leaving contingencies alone."

"Edith—but no, I won't say it. The other day you said you should try to forget what had happened between us. I did not believe you. I thought you had some secret motive for what you did. Now tell me—for it has puzzled me greatly—why you have taken such pains to conciliate me?"

"Because I wanted to make thee my friend."

"What in the world could you have to gain by my friendship?"

"A great deal. The satisfaction of having conquered an enemy is enough. If I could feel it were so with thee, it would gratify me greatly."

"I can not see why, for my life. Is this what you would call a triumph?"

"It is—and it would be a most happy one to subdue thy dislike to me."

"But even if you did, *you* could never like *me* in return."

"I could, and do, Henriette, and one great regret I feel in going away is occasioned by this very thing, for I believe if I were to remain here we should soon become firm friends."

"Friends! I never had one in my life," she answered, with emotion. "No one before ever desired *my* friendship."

"There—the self-depreciation again! However, thou canst never say that again, for I am a proof to the contrary. What wouldst thou say to a correspondence after I am gone?"

"Oh! I should like it of all things," she answered quickly; and added, "but you do not yet know me thoroughly. When you do, you will retract what you have said."

"Not a word. At any rate, expect to hear from me after I am landed in my new home. And now, farewell to thee, for I must begone."

"Edith, I do not yet believe you will go to England—not that you don't expect to—but I have a reason. Now," she continued, offering her hand rather awkwardly, "you have done more to subdue me than I

thought any one could, and if it should chance that we never meet again, you may at least hear from me. There, go quickly, before my evil nature returns."

Edith pressed her hand, and left her with joy in her heart, such as the angels feel over the repenting sinner.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THAT evening Mrs. Hermon and her son sat engaged in earnest conversation. It was evident they intended it should be private, but there was a little bird sitting on the bough of a tree that bent down close by the open window, and it chanced that he played eaves-dropper, which you know has been the privilege of little birds from time immemorial. This, however, was one whom Edith had been in the habit of throwing crumbs to all the winter long, and therefore he was interested in her affairs, and followed her from house to house to see what she was going to do. We wish we could give him credit for a purely unselfish motive, but we can not. The truth was he had a rising family, and not wishing to take them out of town in the winter, on account of the Indian boy's arrows, he was calculating upon having them fed with crumbs by the same fair hand that had supplied his own wants. And so he, too, was interested in doing all in his power to prevent Edith going to England.

The tiny feathered spy informed me that on this occasion the Quaker's daughter was the subject of their

conversation. He did not hear the commencement, but lighted on the tree just in time to hear Mrs. Hermon say :

"I oppose your wishes no longer. Be happy, my dear Louia, as you deserve to be, and God speed your wooing !"

And then he said there followed thanks and embraces, and he would not be sworn that there were no tears shed by the mother.

"And have you no suspicion where these letters came from ?"

"Not the least in the world. At first, I thought of Mr. Mildman ; but the second one came long after he was gone. I wonder now how they could have prejudiced me so. Dear Edith ! She is indeed a treasure ; and how happy dear Angeline will be to have her for a sister !"

Louis smiled, as if he might be thinking how happy another person he knew of would be too, though he said nothing about it. He turned the letters over and over, and presently remarked : "And you can not even guess the author ?"

"Guess ? no, how should I ? No one seemed to know so much as how they got here. I have not the most distant idea ; have you ?"

"Yes, mother ; I could have told you at first that it was Henriette's doings."

"Henriette ! You make me more ashamed of the

affair than ever. But why should she ? what could be her motive ?”

“The same that would have induced her to take Edith’s life,” said Louis, with a shudder. “She is a strange creature, and keeps very close of late ; no wonder !”

“There has certainly come a great change over her since that time. This afternoon I surprised her in tears. I never remember seeing her weep since she grew up, before.”

Louis was now too full of hopes of happiness to cast many thoughts upon his singular cousin. They were wandering into another and more pleasant channel. He longed to fly to Edith to tell her all, and pour out to her the feelings he had so long held in restraint. And how would she receive him ? Should he be able to persuade her to remain and make them all happy ? We shall see.

* * * * *

Mr. Harding seemed the happiest of the happy. What made him so Alice could not possibly divine ; and when she teased him to tell her, he shook his head and said :

“No, no. I can keep a secret ; cunning as thou art, Alice, thou shalt not wheedle this out of me.” She then tried her best to guess, but failed ; and finally told him she did not consider him very polite to behave so, when her dear Edith was on the point of leaving them.

Upon this Mr. Harding rubbed his hands together, with an air of intense enjoyment, and walked up and down, looking at her with a very comical expression of countenance, while, for her part, she was ready to cry with vexation. As soon as he saw how she felt, he was sorry, and seemed as if he could not contain the secret another moment. "However, I *must* not!" he said, and thereupon fell to teasing Alice about her wedding, which was to come off on the morrow, until she was glad to run away, and take refuge in her friend's apartment.

And there she saw Edith sitting among a pile of things such as ladies going to Europe now-a-days know little about. And Maretah, busied with packing, was bustling hither and thither. Yes; inconsistent as it is with the Indian character, Maretah was bustling, for she was fast becoming a civilized woman, and was packing a trunk. In her savage state she had been accustomed to leap into a canoe, when she wanted to take a journey, and paddle away with no baggage at all, unless it might be a buffalo-robe or a bear-skin. But now the case was different. She was going across the mighty waters in a great canoe with wings; and buffalo-robos and bear-skins were fashionable only in America.

Alice looked at her friend, and noticed that every day she seemed to grow a shade more pale, though she still preserved a calm and cheerful exterior, and was thoughtful of every body's enjoyment but her own.

Just now there came a summons for Edith to appear below, as a friend desired to speak with her. Now, as we have seen, Alice had her full share of curiosity and never missed an opportunity of gratifying it, when she thought she could do so harmlessly. So she ran and peeped (we know it is very uncommon in these times for ladies to do so), but Alice peeped over the stairway; and what did she see? She saw what sent a thrill of delight through her heart;—~~why~~ it should, was strange; for it was only Doctor Louis Hermon who walked into her own little parlor.

The aforesaid little bird had been sitting on a branch near Edith's window, watching the packing operations with a drooping crest. He was expecting this visit, however; and when he heard there was a call, and saw that Edith ran down stairs, he quietly hopped down the tree, and took a convenient post of observation close by the parlor lattice.

"Forgive my intrusion, Edith. I come on an errand of some importance to myself, at least. It may, and may not surprise you; but I came hither to persuade you to give up all thoughts of this long, sad journey, and to remain here where so many love you, and would sorely grieve to lose you."

Was it a gleam of joy that for a moment sparkled over her face, or was it only a stray beam of light that played upon it through the open lattice? Whichever it was, it was succeeded by a look so sad and

grave, as to send a sudden fear, like a pang, across her lover's heart.

"Oh no, it may not be! My father desired me to go; my duty to my aunt demands it."

"I did not lose sight of that, Edith. There are two plans I have to propose to you in reference to it. One is to write to your aunt, persuading her to come hither—(you say she has no ties of kindred there to bind her). Were you to be deprived of her protection there you would be alone among strangers, while here you would not want friends and most devoted ones. The other plan is, if you still consider it binding upon you to go, that you do so, and bring her here. Certainly she would be willing to do what is best for your happiness. But in this latter case, Edith, I would ask to accompany you with the most dear right of calling myself your protector!"

For a moment the young girl bowed her head, and her lover saw that a rosy flush o'erspread her face from chin to forehead. Then she was deadly pale, and her voice trembled as she answered,

"Spare me, oh, spare me this! Unkind, ungrateful as I must appear, I can not, I must not hear it!"

"Is it indeed so? I cherished a hope that my affection was not altogether unreturned; but it was too much for me to dream of—and now, oh, Edith my punishment is great: can you forgive my presumption?"

"Say not so, it is I who am unworthy. Alas! why must I inflict such pain, and on *thee*?"

"Something unusual moves you, Edith! What is it? Or have I no right to intrude upon your confidence? Still I am not satisfied to leave you thus. 'Tis true I have no claim; but is it too much to ask why you thus discard me?"

"Spare me this discussion," cried Edith; "it can not end otherwise, and I have nothing to tell thee further, at least nothing that I ought—that I *can* tell!"

Louis started impatiently from his seat and paced the room. "Edith, I have encountered mysteries in others, but did not look for it from you. You have always appeared the very soul of truth and candor; and now when my happiness is concerned (and I can not believe it a matter of indifference to you, because your kindness of heart is too great for that), you meet me thus! 'You ought not to tell,' 'you can not tell.' Is there nothing due to me then in explanation of your conduct? But you shall at least say that you do not love me. I will be satisfied thus far before I leave you! You are silent; what am I to think from this? There is something in your manner that almost—pardon me, but I almost dare to think, to hope—how shall I say it?" He took his seat beside her, and lowered his voice to a tone of subduing tenderness. "Oh, Edith, *is* my love so unwelcome to you—*is* it entirely unreturned?"

She hid her face, and a conscious blush crimsoned neck, hands and bosom. She did not answer him, she could not.

"You do not disclaim it," he cried, with joy; "may I then—dare I, believe that it is so?"

"Believe nothing—think nothing—except that this is all in vain!"

"I will not! because—yes—you do, I feel now that you do love me. What shall part us since it is so? You were destined for me on that day when I took you from a watery grave, and now I claim you as my own. I will not resign the right I have to your hand! Tell me then dear girl, what is this imaginary obstacle to our mutual happiness. Remember you have now no right to withhold the knowledge of it from me. Can you think to do so, when perhaps a single word might secure both your happiness and my own?"

"It would not, indeed it would not. Oh, if thou dost indeed love me, cease to urge me thus! If thou didst but know, thou wouldst feel as I do. It is my only course, and I owe it to thee, to myself, to be firm!"

"Edith, let me ask if this is in compliance with your father's wish, for I have heard that this people refuse to sanction marriage engagements with those beyond their own pale?"

"My father never alluded to the subject. I do not believe the thought ever occurred to him; and

even if it had, he would not in such a matter have restrained me. Oh, no; he was too good, too kind, thus to exact obedience!"

"And Henriette, has she any concern in the matter?"

"None; she could not influence me here."

"Is it then because you deem me less prompt in the expression of my feelings than you considered I should be? Ah, you know not what it cost me, but it was no selfish fear restrained me!"

"I knew, and so far from resenting it, I admired and respected thy motives. Oh no, believe me, I would not lightly disregard aught so dear to me" (and here her voice became tremulous, and she avoided the earnest glances of his eyes) "as thy happiness, or cast from me so rich a treasure as thy affection, were I not actuated by a motive, which, if thou canst not read, thou wilt at least do me the justice to respect." She arose from her seat, and extended her hand to bid him farewell.

"Oh, Edith, will you, can you, do this thing? You are my own—and can I thus resign you?"

Here the little bird peeping under the curtain, saw that Edith looked so much like fainting, that out of pure humanity Louis was obliged to support her with his arm. For a moment she permitted her head to incline—only to *incline* toward his shoulder, then tearing herself away from his embrace, she disappeared

from the room, and the young man was left alone in despair. The little bird assured me the scene was so touching, that he was obliged to use the tip of his wing to brush away a tear, and he determined to fly all about the neighborhood and find out if possible what this mighty secret was that kept two such loving hearts asunder, that he might whisper it in Louis's ear. Accordingly that night he chose his perch as near the window as he could get, thinking perhaps Edith would whisper it in her dreams, and did not put his head under his wing fearing he should lose the sound. In consequence of this unaccustomed and unsafe position, when he fell into a doze, he nodded, which disturbed his equilibrium, and he came very near falling into the jaws of a ferocious-looking cat that lurked under the wall watching him, and he saw by the moonlight that her mouth watered and her whiskers bristled when she thought he was about to fall.

Mrs. Hermon impatiently awaited her son's return, nothing doubting that success had crowned his expedition, and hastened to meet him with a sympathetic smile.

"And what says our dear Edith to my noble boy?" She saw the moment after that her joy had been ill-timed, and repented her hasty salutation.

He concealed nothing from her, but told her all, assuring her that he believed Edith loved him, but

that she was restrained by some powerful motive, of either real or imaginary duty. She listened to the account of his discomfiture as most mothers would, scarcely believing her senses upon hearing that any one could resist her son's attractions, or be so blind as to think of declining such honor and happiness as must await the woman of his choice.

"I now see how unjust I have been to this maiden, in suspecting her of designs to entrap you. But I will see her ; I will go myself and try to discover this mystery. I will take those miserable letters with me, show them to her, and explain what may have seemed strange in my conduct. Woman's tact may aid me ; and rely upon it, I will know this formidable secret. I have been in the way of your happiness, my dear son ; and now I will do every thing in my power to secure it if possible.

Mr. Harding persevered in keeping his secret ; but his exuberance of spirits was all gone, and he looked as sad and grave as Alice could desire ; for she had told him that the matter, from which she had all along hoped so much, was ended in disappointment. Edith had refused the offered hand of the young physician.

"As long as I live," cried Alice, "I will never have a secret again, or listen to one from another person. I detest the very word ! And to think of Edith persevering in a mystery ! When I heard her coming up stairs after his visit, I ran to embrace her, and to rejoice

with her in her happiness ; but, to my great surprise, she appeared to be quite overcome with grief and distress. All I could learn was, that I must never mention the subject to her again ; that she could not accept the happiness offered her, and never should ; and begged me to leave her until she should be calm. So it is all over now !” And Alice ended her story with a burst of tears.

“I am sorry, my darling ; sorry indeed ; but it may not be so hopeless after all. Go thou, and when Edith is composed, send her down to me. I have a letter for her, which may contain somewhat to surprise you all with.”

When Edith came into Mr. Harding’s study, he handed her the letter spoken of.

“Prepare thyself for sad news from thy aunt, my child. So much of the contents I know, though the seal was not broken by me, as thou wilt learn hereafter.”

It was a letter from England, commenced by her aunt, and finished by another hand. The first part was addressed to her father and herself, briefly informing them that, feeling her end was nigh at hand, she desired to tell her niece how much pain it gave her to be unable to offer her a home, and protection under a roof that should soon no longer be her own dwelling-place. She felt that ere this could reach them, she should be called to inhabit a mansion beyond the earth, and

prayed that a merciful God would provide her dear Edith with friends and protection. She then bade them farewell, with the blessing of a dying woman on her sister's child.

The remainder of the letter was by another, informing them of her decease, and the particulars connected therewith ; and also alluding to certain matters of business, to which Edith gave, at that time, but little attention.

The letter was dated several months previously, and must have reached Boston some time before it came to Edith's hands. Mr. Harding told her he was not now at liberty to explain how it reached him, but would do so soon. After leaving her awhile to her grief, he entreated her to give herself no uneasiness with regard to the future ; but to consider that her home as long as she desired to remain with them ; or, he added, with a smile, until she might be prepared to accept a happier one. He had already arranged the matter of her passage in the Isabel ; and it gave him, as it would Alice, no small degree of pleasure, to feel that she would now be a permanent member of their family.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

It was the evening of Alice's bridal, and a small number of guests had assembled at her father's house on the occasion. It was her desire that it should be as private as possible, both because the former unhappy affair had been so widely talked of, and on account of her friend. Three sad months had hardly passed since Edith laid her father in his grave, and the recent saddening news from England cast another cloud over the sky of the orphan.

How different was the blooming bride of this evening from her who once before stood at the marriage altar, transfixed into an icy statue! Did her cold hand now refuse to ratify the holy promise? Oh, no; it rested warm and trembling in that of him who had ever been her chosen.

And by her side stood as fair a bridesmaid as ever graced a similar occasion. In her robe of simple white—truly emblematic of her purity of mind—very pale, but ever calm and cheerful, sympathizing in a happiness she might never hope to enjoy; she kept her place by the gay blushing bride, with modest unpretending dignity.

Her lover was there too, with a new hope springing in his heart; for Mr. Harding lost no time in informing him of the occurrence that had changed Edith's plans; and instead of now gazing upon her for the last time, as he anticipated, he enjoyed the satisfaction of knowing that she would continue near, and ventured to trust that time might remove the hidden obstacle that lay in the way of their happiness. Indeed he was not certain that it was not removed already, and waited for an opportunity to whisper a question in her ear.

"Edith, I have heard to-day what gives me inexpressible joy. You will not go; thank God we shall not lose you!"

"I can not go now, indeed; and yet I know not that it is for the best to remain."

"I have hoped that this would influence your opinion of yesterday. Will you not tell me that I hope not vainly?"

"I feared this. My decision must remain unchanged. Do not, oh do not force me to repeat it!"

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE ship that was to have borne our heroine over the mighty waters was speeding along with a fair wind across the ocean billow. Edith sat at her open window watching the white sails as they were marked against the horizon, when there came a messenger from Mrs. Hermon. The messenger proved to be no other than Louis himself, who informed Edith that his mother desired to see her on business of some importance, and added a request that she would bring with her a certain letter, found one morning upon her toilet. There was something in this last request that made Edith's heart flutter strangely, and it was not with her usual calm exterior that she placed her hand within the young physician's arm, and accepted his escort to Mrs. Hermon's dwelling.

"My mother sent for you, Edith, rather than come herself to you, because, her business being of a private nature, she thought you would thus be less liable to interruption. Probably you have not heard that Henriette left us yesterday?"

"Henriette left you! and without telling you whither she was going?"

"Oh, no. She left a letter informing us of her intentions. She is in that vessel which, you observe, is fast disappearing in the shadows of evening—the ship that was to have borne you away from our sight forever. I can not say we greatly regret the change of passengers, however."

"You do indeed surprise me! Has she then friends in England, or what is her object in going there?"

"To enter a convent. She tells us that she could not remain here and be happy, that if she had remained longer the good resolutions she had recently made would have given way, and that her only safety consisted in going. She says that but for you, she would never have felt the desire she experiences to atone for the past, and that she can only do so now by the most austere discipline, and rigid self-denial. Poor girl! she was always strange and wayward, and her bodily infirmity should make us the more indulgent to her mental deformity."

Conversation of this character, and chiefly relating to Henriette, was all that passed between Edith and her lover during their walk. As for Louis, he seemed content to wait for further developments before urging his own matters upon her attention. They had now reached their destination, and Edith received Mrs. Hermon's affectionate greeting with a hopeful degree of embarrassment.

"You received a letter from England recently, I am informed.—Nay, my son, if Edith has no objection, I beg you will remain!"

"I did. It was written at my aunt's request, and seemed to have been delayed in the delivery."

"It should have reached you some time ago. Do you know the cause of its detention?"

"I do not."

"I can tell you, my dear. Henriette has had possession of it until within a few days, when she gave it to Mr. Harding, with instructions not to give it to you until a certain time should elapse, and not to inform you how it came to him until after she was gone. She says that one day she was walking near your late dwelling, when she met a messenger with the letter in his hand. He was seeking your father, and Henriette bade him give the letter to her, as she was going immediately to your house, and would herself undertake to place it directly in his hand. She kept it from you, because she had reasons of her own for wishing you to go away, and feared its reception would defeat your purpose. And now, Edith, I will ask you to let me see another letter you have in your possession."

She drew forth the other letter spoken of, and presented it to Mrs. Hermon, with visible agitation.

"And do you take these, my child," said Mrs. Hermon, handing her the two anonymous communications, "read them, and if you have seen any thing of coldness or dis-

trust manifested in my treatment of you, attribute it to motherly affection, which is sometimes alarmed too easily, and let your kindness prompt you to forgive me."

Edith retired to a table in another part of the room, where Louis considerably placed a light for her, and sat down to read the letters as requested, although the characters danced so upon the paper, that after she was done she had no very distinct idea of what she had been reading.

Meanwhile Mrs. Hermon and Louis were perusing that which Edith had placed in her hand at her request, and since it seems to be the property of all in the room, we will peep over the good lady's shoulder, and gratify our laudable curiosity to know its contents.

"To you who have come so strangely into my once happy home, a mother desires to express a mother's feelings. I never thought to see you under my roof again, but circumstances have compelled me to request your presence.

"And now I warn, I entreat you to respect the sanctuary of our home. Your misfortunes I pity, your rectitude I honor, and I rely upon you to be guided by the principle that ever seems to actuate your conduct. Do not rob me of my best earthly treasure, the comfort and support of my declining years!

"I have a reason for this which I am not called upon to tell you; it is one that will remain ever un-

changed. Never think you can be more to him than you are now; dearer it is true you may be, but nearer you can not come. In a short time the ocean will roll between you; but even should you remain here there is a gulf divides you, wider by far. Should he proffer you his affection, accept it not! a mother's blessing can never hallow your union.

"I need not ask you to conceal this, or all knowledge of it from my son: yet keep it for your own strength, it may help you. If a weak moment seem likely to overcome you, read these, the outpourings of a mother's heart, and it may aid you to perform your duty.

"And now, my child, may God bless you and give you friends who will kindly cherish you, is the prayer of one who must soon be to you a stranger.

"E. H."

When they had finished reading it, Louis said: "Mother, it almost deceives me now. It is perfect!"

"Oh, my son, to think of that girl's baseness! It is indeed well she is gone. And now," she added with a smile of pleasure, "I think we have discovered Edith's secret at last!"

She took the letter in her hand and approached Edith.

"My child, did you think this came from me?"

"I did not doubt it."

"No wonder, for it was well-contrived. When and how did you receive it?"

"It lay upon my toilet on the morning after I came at your request to Angeline."

"Do not wrong me, my dear, by thinking for another moment that it came from me. Do you guess the author of those letters?"

"No," she was incapable just then of guessing any thing.

"My child, it was Henriette!"

She started from her seat in surprise, "Henriette!"

"Yes, and she was the author of *this* one also."

There was something more in Edith's face now than surprise, there was pleasure:

Mrs. Hermon passed her arm affectionately around her and whispered a question in her ear. (My faithful little bird was listening, and he informs me that these were her precise words.)

"Does not this explain the mystery you would not unravel for my son?"

(The bird says he did not hear a single word in reply, but he saw that Edith hid her eyes on Mrs. Hermon's shoulder, and that at a look from his mother, Louis came and stood very near them, that she took Edith's hand in her own, and said; "Have I your consent, my dear?" but still the little bird could not hear that Edith made any answer, though cer-

tainly her hand did not seem to offer any resistance; whereupon Mrs. Hermon continued:

"You once told me, my son, that you would not seek to make this treasure, which you counted the dearest gift that earth could bestow, your own, until your mother's hand should place it in yours. I do so now, and pray God to bless my children with the happiness they deserve!"

My friend the Oriole declares that after witnessing the scene thus far he did not consider it polite or honorable to play the spy any longer; so you see that even birds have some sense of propriety in eaves-dropping. Therefore, convinced that all was right, he hopped up to the top of the tree in which all his family were sleeping, and although it was night, he was in such a state of ecstasy that he commenced singing with all his might, and the other birds, thinking daylight was come, put out their heads and began to chirp and twitter, when seeing their mistake, they called to him to know what was the matter, and an old robin who had a nest of very young ones in the neighborhood, said he was a fool, and scolded him for disturbing the children; while his wife, alarmed at such unaccountable behavior, ordered him immediately to bed, and told him she was ashamed to see him going on so like a crazy unpuritanical nightingale.

As to the particulars of the wedding, and Angeline's pride and delight at being permitted to stand as brides-

maid to her in whom she was now to find something even dearer than a friend, we do not consider it important to describe them in detail. It may be well, however, to mention that the Governor himself was among the guests, and that he and Mr. Harding together considered that some credit was owing to them for their penetration with regard to the superiority of the Quaker's daughter ; and that he playfully threatened the bride after some such fashion as this, putting on a portentous frown :

" Ah, we have found thee out at last, my obstinate little Quaker ; now I see who those friends of thine were, and look to it that we do not summon ye all to appear before the council to-morrow and answer for these doings !"

And further, on another occasion he was heard to say to little Charity : " That was a brave maiden, my girl, and if thou dost equal her in truth and courage, right proud will thy father be to call thee daughter !"

It was remarked by Angeline on that happy morning that the tree nearest the house was literally covered with feathered songsters, and that they seemed to be celebrating a jubilee. She noticed one in particular on the very topmost branch, which bent and waved with his weight ; she described him as a bird of the gayest plumage, no doubt an oriole, and he seemed to be the leader of the choir, the governor of the birds, as it might be. No fiddler in the ecstasies

of his musical enthusiasm ever cut more capers than did this peculiar bird. Angeline threw out of the window a handful of crumbs of the wedding-cake, and a number of the birds hopped down and partook of the entertainment. The gay fellow appeared determined that all should have a taste, from the oldest to the youngest, and busied himself in flying up and down, waiting on such as, either from extreme youth or age, were unable to help themselves; and when the fair bride came to the casement to look at them, this same oriole was particularly ecstatic, and flew around her head three times, as if he was inclosing her in a charmed circle. Year after year these orioles built their nests in the tree, and grew so tame that they would sit upon the window-sills and sing.

Notwithstanding Edith's marriage, Maretah continued to consider her her own peculiar charge, until by and by, when she used to sit upon the nursery floor with a group of brown-eyed, thoughtful-looking little ones gathered close around her, listening eagerly to the stories of her forest life, and hearing her chant her wild wood songs and legends.

Occasionally they heard of Henriette in her distant seclusion, where she was considered a model of a devoted Christian. She inflicted upon herself such marvels of austere discipline, and bore herself with such marked decision of conduct, that in time she became Abbess of the monastery in which she at first took

refuge, and Edith learned, through one who had visited her retreat, that she was earnestly engaged in a project for converting Quakers to Catholicism.

There is one circumstance we almost forgot to mention. One day, shortly after the marriage of our heroine, it happened that Mrs. Hermon casually remarked to her that she had in her drawer a miniature of a very dear friend of her early youth, to whom she was bound by ties of no ordinary school-girl affection, and that she had been many times perplexed on looking at her, to remember what association it was that connected her with her past life. She then mentioned the sketch in the possession of Angeline, and sent the little girl to bring both that and the picture from her bureau. As soon as she displayed the miniature, Edith uttered an exclamation of delighted surprise, accompanied by a burst of tears.

"It is my own dear mother!" and taking the counterpart from her bosom, she opened it to the astonished eyes of Mrs. Hermon.

"Henriette knew it! I remember now she made some allusion of the kind before she went away."

How Mrs. Hermon regretted that she had not obeyed the first impulse of her heart, in taking the Quaker's daughter to her bosom! "And now, my dear child, doubly dear as Margaret's daughter, it only remains for me to make the future atone for it all!"

"And, mamma," cried Angeline, "don't you think that Edith's mother must have named her for you?"

CHAPTER XL.

CONCLUSION.

OUR story of the "Quaker's Daughter" is well-nigh ended. After patiently enduring her many trials she was rewarded with a happiness so richly merited. It must not, however, be supposed that her future was an uncheckered scene of ease and enjoyment; for the violent and intolerant spirit of the time, though quenched in her particular case, still lived and held its sway. Her kind heart never ceased to warm toward her father's sect, whose religious opinions and straightforward conscientiousness, she learned in her days of adversity to regard with the reverence that was their due, and when she heard of their sufferings and sorrows, her tender spirit grieved for, and longed to relieve them, and many an oppressed and downcast heart was cheered and encouraged by her charitable ministrations. True to her father's teachings, no fear of man ever turned her from the path of duty. She trod the onward way, secure in the principles by which she was guided, and continued to win and retain the respect of all who knew her; while, seeing her example,

many took courage and began to walk fearlessly in the plain path before them. Her husband and Mr. Harding stood foremost among those who obtained from the king his merciful interposition in behalf of this oppressed and much slandered, though peculiar people, and when the prison doors were thrown open and they went forth once more in freedom, many a blessing fell upon the home that sheltered her and was made glad and happy by her presence.

The world is aware that the early history of the Quakers in New England fills a page in her records which the descendants of our Puritan ancestors would gladly seal forever from the eyes of men. The time of these occurrences is yet too recent for justice to either party to be awarded. The consciousness of a cruel intolerance on the one hand, and the remembrance of wrong on the other, are too fresh in the minds of their descendants, and years must pass away before either can regard the other with impartiality. But our historians and others should remember that the blot is only made deeper through attempts to excuse those deeds of cruelty by false representations of their victims, and it becomes the duty of every faithful representative of those times, to depict their characters with fairness, and to do justice to the motives that influenced their conduct.

We trust the time is not far distant when the spirit

that still characterizes New England men, especially her clergy, will give place to a more enlightened feeling of Christian brotherhood. Let it be remembered that time was when the Quakers stood alone against abuses that are now cried down by the voice of the majority, and if their peculiarities are fast disappearing from our sight, their principles remain.

The good grain is winnowed and gathered into our garners, while the useless chaff is scattered by the winds of Heaven.

THE END.

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